

Senate passes revised UB 2020 plan

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ALBANY, N.Y. (WIVB) - Albany is coming to the rescue of the UB 2020 plan. Senate approval on Wednesday of a revised plan paves the way for a dramatic expansion of the university's mission here.

Senator George Maziarz said, "This means a lot."

A lot to western New York. Senator Maziarz was one of five lawmakers from the area who were able to drum up overwhelming bipartisan support to pass the UB 2020 growth plan.

Sen. Mark Grisanti said, "In conjunction with the medical campus in the same area, is the new Bethlehem Steel of Buffalo."

>> Learn more about the bill here

We've heard about the plans for years. The medical schools will be moving downtown to the medical corridor, restoring south Campus and improving north campus, which will be home to the arts and sciences.

"I can assure you that this will make Buffalo, UB, and western New York a much better place to live," said Sen. Maziarz.

The UB 2020 plan failed to pass last year. This time around, UB made sure the message was loud and clear, putting in detailed tuition hikes.

UB President John Simpson said, "We're going to take up to 20 percent of the revenues from tuition increases and simply put them back into need-based aid."

And those tuition increases will be set by the university, not the state. It would cap at \$375 a semester.

Sen. Grisanti said, "If you're making under \$60,000, you're locked into a tuition rate for 2010 and 2011."

Bottom line, says **outgoing president John Simpson**, UB would remain affordable for those who might have trouble paying in the future.

"I think it just takes off the table the notion that UB is going to price itself out of some people's abilities," said Simpson.

Another key component of the plan allows the university to enter into public private partnerships, which could pose problems with state union employees. We called the local CSEA office, but haven't heard a response yet.

This bill still has to pass the Assembly, which could be the biggest hurdle. Governor Andrew Cuomo has already publicly stated that he supports the UB 2020 plan.

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