

Despite what we know are your best efforts on behalf of public higher education in New York State for which we are very grateful, we are very concerned about serious budget shortfalls that will unfairly impact New York State community colleges. New York State's proposed \$10 billion reduction in spending has hit SUNY community colleges particularly hard.

The SUNY community colleges request for funding to match last year's levels was denied and there is no increase in per FTE dollar amount this year which is also characterized as a period of enrollment volatility and uncertainty. We recognize that all agencies across the state will have to share in reductions, but SUNY community colleges have already been disproportionately impacted by the State Budget.

Past federal stimulus support has been helpful, but it is not nearly enough for New York, the hardest hit state in this pandemic. With 30 million unemployed and displaced workers nationally including many of our own Westchester Community College students, federal funding in any forthcoming stimulus must recognize and address the special needs of NYS as a "hardest hit" region and the essential and vital role community colleges will play in the nation's recovery.

Here is what's needed:

1. When the Legislature is reviewing the Budget Director's plan, we ask that you mitigate excessive reductions in community college support thereby maintaining our ability to serve the state's most at-risk population who are needed in the still evolving workforce.
2. Call and advocate with our Congressional delegation to provide unrestricted aid directly to New York State to offset the drastic economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.