



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Frank Padavan

Padavan Unveils New Higher Education Plan for SUNY and CUNY

FRANK PADAVAN March 4, 2009

New York State Senator Frank Padavan (Queens) joined with his Senate Republican colleagues today in unveiling a new proposal aimed at making tuition at SUNY and CUNY more affordable and accessible while generating revenue for the higher education systems.

“At a time when our economy is facing the most serious challenges since the Great Depression, we must do everything we can to preserve, protect and expand upon the standard of higher education in our community and throughout the state,” Padavan said. “It’s vital to our economic future that every New Yorker can access a quality and affordable higher education that will build upon their foundation and strengthen New York’s workforce.”

The proposal would allow parents to enroll children under the age of fourteen into a new program that would lock-in future tuition at CUNY and SUNY at the present day rate. Revenue from this pre-pay program would in turn be invested into increased support for SUNY and CUNY schools.

If this plan were enacted, SUNY and CUNY could see an investment of over \$8 billion over the next 10 years, with an estimated \$216 million for 2009-2010. The proposed program is structured to allow for new participants over a five year period from enactment and includes guarantees from the State to protect parents who participate in the program.

“This proposal is proactive, innovative and would help meet the needs of current college students, soon- to-be-college students and their families,” Padavan said. “Additionally, this plan will bring much needed fiscal stability and a strong revenue stream for both SUNY and CUNY. The significant revenue generated under this proposal would be an investment in a vibrant and growing higher education for New York college students.”

“Through this plan, parents would be able to invest directly in their child’s college education while locking long-term savings and protecting them from any possible tuition hike in SUNY and CUNY in the future,” Padavan said.

Additionally, Padavan called for all the funds from the recent SUNY tuition increase to benefit students instead of being raided for general fund spending as it was approved by the State Legislative Majorities and the Governor as a part of the “Deficit Reduction Plan” that was enacted in early February.

“Over 9,000 students in the 11th Senate District attend a CUNY school either here in our community or throughout New York City with thousands more attending a SUNY campus throughout our state,” Padavan said. “The increases slated for the upcoming fall semester places an unfair burden on countless families and students throughout our community at a time when they are all finding it difficult to make ends meet. With state budget negotiations ongoing, it’s important for all legislative leaders to take action that will fight off onerous tuition increases at CUNY and SUNY and to ensure that the funding students pay through their tuition remains in the SUNY and CUNY systems and benefits their pursuit of a higher education.