



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kenneth P. LaValle

## Senator LaValle Criticizes Proposed Suny Cuts-

KENNETH P. LAVALLE October 26, 2009

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### **Governor's Proposal is Unfair and Hurts State's Economy**

Senator Kenneth P. LaValle (R-C-I, Port Jefferson), former Chairman and current ranking member of the Senate Higher Education Committee, is seriously concerned about Governor Paterson's recent proposal to cut funding to SUNY's two and four year schools by \$114 million. "That's on top of a \$146 million 2008-09 reduction and shameless raid of \$68 million in SUNY tuition revenues," said Senator LaValle. "Considering the growing enrollment and economic benefits it provides, the SUNY system should not be subjected to the type of disproportionate budget cuts being proposed by Governor Paterson."

"There is no doubt that New York is facing difficult choices in terms of closing the budget deficit, but we have to make smart cuts that won't jeopardize New York's ability to help the economy recover," said Senator LaValle. "The Governor's latest proposal to cut an additional \$114 million from SUNY's funding would only compound the system's financial problems and hurt efforts to create new jobs."

"In this tough economy, investments in our higher education system are more important than ever," continued Senator LaValle. "Last year, I championed a 5-year Capital Construction Plan for Long Island's state universities and community colleges that was included in the 2008 state budget. However, many of these projects have been stalled by the Governor's office."

"SUNY institutions across the state have made great strides in research and innovation and generate a tremendous share of economic activity," Senator LaValle said. "We should be supporting the continuation of SUNY's achievements to help ensure its competitiveness and ability to create new jobs."

Senator LaValle believes there are smarter ways and better choices available to address the budget deficit. As an alternative to the cuts proposed by the Governor, Senator LaValle said he supports an increase in tuition for out-of-state students attending SUNY schools. A recent report by Comptroller Tom DiNapoli noted that SUNY charges, on average, \$8,463 less than other states for undergraduate out-of-state tuition. Our public universities could generate millions in additional revenues over four years by increasing the out-of-state rate.

"The higher education cuts proposed by the Governor are simply shortsighted," said Senator LaValle. "We must continue making the investments needed to keep SUNY competitive or we will lose the crown jewel in our public higher education system and suffer even greater economic consequences."