



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kenneth P. LaValle

## Senator Ken LaValle: 2014 Higher Education Legislative Report Now Available

KENNETH P. LAVALLE January 28, 2015

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January 28, 2015 – Senator Ken LaValle, Chairman of the NY State Senate Standing Committee on Higher Education, announced that the 2014 Higher Education Legislative Report is now available.

Senator LaValle said, “College affordability remains a major focus of the committee. While the budget included a TAP expansion, and I sponsored a package of bills designed to enhance college affordability, which passed the Senate in June, I know that many hardworking students and families continue to struggle to pay for college.” He continued, “Therefore, I will again make this a priority of the committee and seek to build on this year’s accomplishments by working collaboratively with the Governor and Assembly on this important issue.”

“A topic of great importance to the committee involves campus sexual assault. This past year, I held a roundtable with representatives from the public and independent college sectors. I also released a report with 14 legislative recommendations in October. I intend to prioritize the passage of legislation that will protect all college students with regards to the prevention and handling of sexual assault cases on our college campuses.” concluded Senator LaValle.

Additionally, the committee continued the work of supporting and examining ways to bolster the multiple sectors of higher education, as well as its oversight of the various professions licensed and seeking licensure by the State Education Department.

The 2014-2015 enacted budget produced a general fund increase to SUNY's state-operated budget, the fourth consecutive increase in annual base operating aid to community colleges, and the first increase to the State's Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) since the 2000-2001 enacted budget. The budget also created a full, SUNY or CUNY tuition scholarship in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields for students in the top ten percent of their high school's graduating class. While the Legislature was unable to negotiate a robust five-year capital plan for SUNY and CUNY, it did include an additional \$175 million in capital funding for the two public university systems.

The licensed professions continued to occupy a substantial portion of the committee's time. The enacted budget included the Nurse Practitioners Modernization Act, which allows for collaborative relationships between nurse practitioners with more than 3,600 hours of experience and physicians, instead of written practice agreements and protocols. After the completion of the budget, the committee advanced several pieces of legislation involving the professions. Two significant pieces of legislation that were advanced but not enacted include the ownership of certified public accounting (CPA) firms by non-CPAs and the licensure of dietitians and nutritionists. Senator LaValle stated that he intends to continue to push for the passage of these two bills, along with others.

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***NOTE: The entire report can be downloaded from the link below.***