



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Gustavo Rivera

Senator Rivera and Members of the Senate Democratic Conference Call for Extension of SUNY and CUNY Credit Program for Puerto Rican and U.S. Virgin Island Evacuees

GUSTAVO RIVERA June 13, 2018

| ISSUE: **SUNY (STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK), CUNY (CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK), PUERTO RICO RELIEF EFFORTS, PUERTO RICO CRISIS, TUITION**

(Albany, NY) – State Senator Gustavo Rivera and 22 members of the Senate Democratic Conference wrote to the Board of Trustees for the State University of New York (SUNY) and to the City University of New York (CUNY) urging them to extend the in-state tuition credit program for Puerto Rican and U.S. Virgin Island evacuees for the 2018-2019 academic year. This program was initially approved by SUNY and CUNY in October 2017 after Governor Cuomo called on both boards to implement such a program. The Board of Trustees for SUNY will vote on this measure tomorrow, June 14, while the Board of Trustees for CUNY will hold the same vote on Monday, June 25.

Since the federal response to Hurricanes Maria and Irma has been inconsistent, uncoordinated, and lackluster, the responsibility has fallen on states and cities to make up for the inefficiency of the federal government. Millions of American citizens continue to live in conditions that are not too different from the conditions immediately following the destruction. Programs, such as SUNY and CUNY's offer of in-state tuition, help provide a bridge for evacuees on the mainland United States to have every opportunity to continue

their education.

“I am extremely pleased that a number of my colleagues have joined me in urging SUNY and CUNY to continue providing evacuees from Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands access to the in-state tuition credit program,” said State Senator Gustavo Rivera. “As a State that hosts a large Puerto Rican and U.S. Virgin Islander communities, we need to ensure that these bright students are able to continue pursuing their education and complete their academic degrees on time. We cannot allow a natural disaster and federal inaction to derail their futures.”