



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Toby Ann Stavisky

Senator Toby Ann Stavisky, Chair of the Higher Education Committee, urges the CUNY Board of Trustees to freeze their tuition increase and abolish the mental health counseling fee for students

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Earlier this week, Senator Stavisky sent a letter to the CUNY Board of Trustees, imploring them to rescind the \$200 tuition increase and \$120 dollar mental health fee approved for the 2020-2021 academic year. The COVID-19 crisis is taking a toll on New York City students, both financially and psychologically, and the Senator believes it is the state's responsibility to help them get back on track toward the goals they have been working hard to achieve.

"CUNY students have already been subject to chronic underfunding at the state level," echoes Timothy Hunter, Chair Person of the University Student Senate. "The COVID-19 outbreak just further exacerbates the disenfranchisement of these students. If the Board of Trustees increases tuition this year, hundreds if not thousands of students will not be able to attend school in the fall. The Governor and the Board of Trustees need to give the students a break and not increase the cost of public higher education this year."

"Last fall I chaired hearings of the higher education committee from Buffalo to Syracuse to New Paltz to Brooklyn and Manhattan and Nassau County," explains Senator Stavisky. "While the testimony of the administrators, faculty and other stakeholders was informative and meaningful, the testimony of the students truly resonated. They described homelessness, food insecurity and classes in temporary, dilapidated structures."

Senator Stavisky understands the financial stress this crisis has put on the state of New York as a whole. However, New York state, and New York City, are only as strong as the people who call them home, and raising tuition for CUNY students right now puts the future of thousands of hard working young people in jeopardy. That is something New York truly cannot afford.

You can find the Senator's letter to the Board of Trustees attached.