

1 BEFORE THE NEW YORK STATE SENATE FINANCE  
AND ASSEMBLY WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEES

2 -----

3 JOINT LEGISLATIVE HEARING

4 In the Matter of the  
2020-2021 EXECUTIVE BUDGET ON  
5 HIGHER EDUCATION

6 -----

7 Hearing Room B  
Legislative Office Building  
8 Albany, New York

9 February 2, 2020  
10 9:35 a.m.

11 PRESIDING:

12 Senator Liz Krueger  
Chair, Senate Finance Committee

13 Assemblywoman Helene Weinstein  
14 Chair, Assembly Ways & Means Committee

15 PRESENT:

16 Senator James L. Seward  
Senate Finance Committee (RM)

17 Assemblyman Edward P. Ra  
18 Assembly Ways & Means Committee (RM)

19 Assemblywoman Deborah J. Glick  
Chair, Assembly Higher Education Committee

20 Senator Toby Stavisky  
21 Chair, Senate Higher Education Committee

22 Senator John C. Liu

23 Assemblywoman Barbara S. Lifton

24 Assemblywoman Karen McMahon

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3 PRESENT: (Continued)

4 Assemblywoman Jo Anne Simon

5 Senator Kenneth P. LaValle

6 Assemblywoman Patricia Fahy

7 Assemblywoman Rebecca A. Seawright

8 Senator Anna Kaplan

9 Assemblyman Al Stirpe

10 Assemblywoman Alicia Hyndman

11 Senator Rachel May

12 Assemblyman Harvey Epstein

13 Assemblyman Doug Smith

14 Senator Andrew Gounardes

15 Assemblyman Charles D. Fall

16 Senator James Gaughran

17 Assemblywoman Rodneyse Bichotte

18 Assemblyman John T. McDonald III

19 Assemblywoman Marianne Buttenschon

20 Senator Brad Hoylman

21 Assemblyman Jake Ashby

22 Assemblywoman Judy Griffin

23 Assemblyman Victor M. Pichardo

24 Senator Robert Jackson

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3 PRESENT: (Continued)

4 Assemblyman William Colton

5

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1                   CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: If people could  
2 take their seats.

3                   Good morning. I am Helene Weinstein,  
4 chair of the New York State Assembly Ways and  
5 Means Committee and cochair of today's  
6 hearing.

7                   Today we begin the sixth in a series  
8 of hearings conducted by the joint fiscal  
9 committees of the Legislature regarding the  
10 Governor's proposed budget for fiscal year  
11 2020-2021. The hearings are conducted  
12 pursuant to the New York State  
13 Constitution and the Legislative Law.

14                   Today the Assembly Ways and Means  
15 Committee and the Senate Finance Committee  
16 will hear testimony concerning the Governor's  
17 budget proposal for higher education.

18                   I'll introduce members of the Assembly  
19 majority, and Senator Krueger, chair of  
20 Senate Finance, will introduce members from  
21 the Senate.

22                   So we have with us our chair of the  
23 Higher Education Committee, Deborah Glick;  
24 Assemblyman Pichardo, Assemblyman Epstein,

1 Assemblyman Stirpe, and Assemblywoman Fahy.

2 Senator Krueger?

3 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Good morning.

4 Thank you, everyone.

5 I'm joined by the chair of Higher Ed,  
6 Toby Stavisky; the ranker on Higher Ed,  
7 John {sic} LaValle; the ranker on Finance,  
8 Jim Seward; Senator Andrew Gounardes; and  
9 Senator Anna Kaplan. And I know I saw  
10 Senator Liu, but I think he's disappeared and  
11 will come back.

12 Thank you. Oh, I'm sorry, Ken  
13 LaValle, how -- excuse me, Ken.

14 SENATOR LaVALLE: That's all right.

15 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Nobody will  
16 forget, Senator.

17 So before introducing the first  
18 witness, a couple of ground rules for all of  
19 the hearings that we've gone through at the  
20 beginning. We have these countdown clocks,  
21 both for the witnesses and for the members to  
22 pay attention to. There will be a green  
23 light when your time starts. When there's  
24 one minute left, the light turns -- as the

1 clock goes down to one minute, the light  
2 turns yellow. And when it's red, it means  
3 thank you and goodbye.

4 (Laughter.)

5 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: No. But you  
6 can always finish your last sentence, please.

7 And witnesses, particularly those  
8 nongovernmental witnesses, are reminded that  
9 we do have your testimony, which was  
10 submitted electronically in advance, it's  
11 been circulated to all the members. So we  
12 encourage you to not read your testimony, but  
13 summarize.

14 A lot of people think they can get  
15 through several pages in five minutes. We're  
16 here to tell you you can't. And if you have  
17 your important point at the end of your  
18 testimony, you'll never get to it. So make  
19 sure to highlight your important parts.

20 And to the members, just timing,  
21 chairs of the relevant committee have  
22 10 minutes. They are the only ones allowed a  
23 follow-up of five minutes after everyone has  
24 gone. All other members have five minutes.

1 And when we get to the nongovernmental  
2 witnesses, the members have three minutes.  
3 And the time is for both questions and  
4 answers.

5 So now I'll introduce our ranker,  
6 Assemblyman Ra, to introduce his Republican  
7 colleagues.

8 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: Thank you.

9 We're joined this morning by  
10 Assemblyman Doug Smith, our ranking member on  
11 the Higher Education Committee, and  
12 Assemblyman Jake Ashby.

13 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: So with that,  
14 we are anxious to begin our hearing. And our  
15 first witness, Kristina Johnson, chancellor,  
16 State University of New York. Please.

17 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Thank you.

18 Good morning. It's a pleasure to be  
19 here. And I'd like to start off by saying  
20 that I will keep to the time.

21 And I'd also like to thank you for all  
22 your support that you've provided, both the  
23 Governor and the Legislature. I really feel  
24 SUNY has tremendous momentum. And so what

1 I'd like to do today is, for the record, I am  
2 Kristina Johnson, the 13th chancellor of the  
3 State University of New York. And I'd like  
4 to personally thank Chairpersons Krueger,  
5 Weinstein, Stavisky and Glick, members of the  
6 Senate and Assembly and legislative staff,  
7 for the opportunity to share with you our  
8 perspective on Governor Cuomo's proposed  
9 Executive Budget, the progress we've made  
10 since last year's hearing, and our plans for  
11 the future.

12 I'd also like to acknowledge and thank  
13 Chairman of the Board Dr. Meryl Tisch and our  
14 entire Board of Trustees for their leadership  
15 and support, and particularly our student  
16 trustee -- who's president of the Student  
17 Assembly of the 1.4 million students in the  
18 State University of New York -- and that is  
19 Austin Ostro, who is here today as well; my  
20 leadership team, who is seated behind me; and  
21 of course all of the people that keep our  
22 system moving forward -- the students, the  
23 faculty, staff and our leadership teams  
24 across the system.

1                   Last fall I had the pleasure of  
2                   finalizing visits to every single one of the  
3                   SUNY institutions, all 64, and really got a  
4                   chance to see the size, the scope, the  
5                   breadth and the diversity of the quality that  
6                   goes into the 30 community colleges, the  
7                   29 state-operated colleges, the five  
8                   statutory, the law school, the medical  
9                   schools, the hospitals -- even the national  
10                  laboratory.

11                  We are involved in all kinds of  
12                  activities, ranging from scholarship research  
13                  to workforce development, carrying out the  
14                  Governor's robust initiative. We deliver  
15                  320,000 non-credit-bearing courses to our  
16                  community college students. That's in  
17                  addition to the couple of hundred thousand  
18                  community college students that are enrolled,  
19                  and the couple of hundred thousand enrolled  
20                  in our four-year institutions as well.

21                  Now, I'm an engineer by training, so  
22                  for me it comes down to data. And what I'd  
23                  like to do is try and put a few words with  
24                  some of those numbers to show you some of the

1 progress we've made and the impact that we're  
2 having on the State of New York.

3 So the first thing is social mobility.  
4 Almost a third of our students have TAP or an  
5 Excelsior scholarship. Think about that. A  
6 third of our students, more than half go  
7 tuition-free. And that's measured by a  
8 social mobility index where 18 out of 29 of  
9 our state-operated campuses rank in the top  
10 10 percent nationally for taking large  
11 numbers of low-income students and graduating  
12 them into high-paying jobs.

13 In fact, on PayScale's recent index,  
14 Maritime College ranked 11th in the entire  
15 country, including all the Ivys, for the kind  
16 of careers that those students get right out  
17 of college and then again their salaries at  
18 mid-career. So SUNY is certainly a gem in  
19 the constellation of the State of New York.

20 SUNY is known for the quality of  
21 education we provide and of course the sheer  
22 size of the largest comprehensive system of  
23 higher education in the country. And it is a  
24 game-changer for New York's economy. When

1           you think about it, almost a third --  
2           actually, a little more than a third of every  
3           college-educated individual in the State of  
4           New York has a SUNY degree.

5                     This year we received 371,000  
6           applications, and we have roughly 3 million  
7           alums. And three out of four of our alums,  
8           within three to five years of their  
9           graduation, are still working and  
10          contributing to the State of New York.

11                    SUNY hospitals are the heartbeat of  
12          the local healthcare in the underserved  
13          communities they call home. They're also the  
14          economic engines of Brooklyn, Central  
15          New York, Long Island, Buffalo -- including  
16          the hospital of Buffalo, of course.

17                    Each SUNY hospital serves higher  
18          percentages of people covered by Medicaid and  
19          Medicare than the general population seen at  
20          other hospitals. Collectively they serve  
21          1.2 million individual patients and 2 million  
22          visits a year. They contribute \$6 billion to  
23          their local economy. And in fact, Downstate  
24          Health Sciences University -- we just changed

1 the name from Downstate Medical Center to  
2 Downstate Health Sciences University --  
3 they're number two in START-UP NY, with  
4 24 spin-off companies in the Governor's  
5 START-UP NY program.

6 So yes, we do serve those that don't  
7 have another option for healthcare. We're  
8 also driving the local economy in these  
9 communities.

10 Our community colleges are critically  
11 important to providing the State of New York  
12 an educated workforce for our dynamic  
13 economy. For many, it's the first step to  
14 realizing their dreams and aspirations for  
15 social mobility. We look forward to working  
16 with the Governor and the Legislature  
17 throughout this budget process to restore the  
18 community college funding floor that you  
19 included in last year's budget, and I thank  
20 you for that.

21 SUNY's Educational Opportunity  
22 Programs are life-changing as well. I didn't  
23 realize this, but the Educational Opportunity  
24 Programs, the average income of the families

1           these students come from is \$21,000. At our  
2           Educational Opportunity Centers, the average  
3           income for those students that come from  
4           families making less than \$15,000 a year. If  
5           you want to talk about how you get into the  
6           middle class in this country, you do it  
7           through SUNY. And we're doing it through our  
8           EOCs, our EOPs, our community colleges, our  
9           tech sector, our comprehensives and our  
10          doctoral institutions. So I'm so proud of  
11          it.

12                        Today we've got 10,274 students within  
13          48 campus-based programs in our EOP programs.  
14          And we've had about 75,000 students over the  
15          52- or 53-year horizon of the EOP program.  
16          And this last fall, we started the Norman  
17          McConney Award for outstanding EOP students.  
18          And I want to tell you about one of these  
19          students. This is a student that's at  
20          Dutchess Community College -- I will not  
21          mention the name -- but she is a mother of  
22          five, with students with special needs, and  
23          she had a 4.0 full-time community college  
24          grade point average. I never had a 4.0 grade

1 point average. This is stunning.

2 But those are the kind of students  
3 that EOP attracts. I couldn't be prouder of  
4 her and every one of those 42 students that  
5 we honored. And the Speaker also was there  
6 to recognize them.

7 Results from two years of the  
8 Excelsior Scholarship Program. I want to say  
9 that enrollments are increased 20 percent.  
10 We had 20,000 SUNY and CUNY students in the  
11 first year and increased to 24,000.

12 Let's look at the results. Our  
13 community college first-year retention rates  
14 went up 20 percent. And they're also up in  
15 our state-operated. That means the program  
16 is working as designed, which is to get more  
17 students out faster with less debt. And they  
18 do have less debt. We're excited about  
19 increasing the cap on family income  
20 eligibility to 150,000.

21 So I said I'd talk about some of our  
22 results from last year. With your support of  
23 our Open Educational Resources, since the  
24 fall of 2017 we have reduced textbook costs

1 to our students a cumulative \$47 million. As  
2 a result of the Provost Innovation Fund, we  
3 have re-enrolled 8,000 students who dropped  
4 out before their loans became due. So they  
5 have the best opportunity to repay those  
6 loans because they will have a degree which  
7 will garner them a higher wage.

8 And with rising rates of anxiety,  
9 depression and suicide among our young adults  
10 nationwide, we launched the SUNY Mental  
11 Health and Wellness Task Force this last  
12 fall, chaired by two of our presidents,  
13 Dr. Wayne Riley of Downstate and Dr. Deborah  
14 Stanley at Oswego.

15 I know you know this; we did  
16 establish, under Governor Cuomo's leadership,  
17 a Food Insecurity Task Force in 2018 which  
18 resulted in, over the last year, having  
19 students having access to food pantries who  
20 are food-insecure at every single one of our  
21 campuses.

22 In all, about 150,000 students are  
23 impacted by one of our SUNY Achieve programs,  
24 which is to get students into credit-bearing

1 courses faster. And that's our corequisite  
2 model. We've been able to get students to  
3 pass basic math and English, a barrier to  
4 completion, in half the time -- twice as  
5 fast.

6 And speaking of half the time and  
7 twice as fast, I have a minute 23 seconds  
8 left, so I'm going to skip to just a couple  
9 of quick accomplishments.

10 One of the pillars of my  
11 chancellorship is not only individualized  
12 education, which is our SUNY Achieve,  
13 SUNY Online -- which I can talk about in a  
14 minute -- it's research and innovation. This  
15 last year SUNY, partnering with Empire State  
16 Development, brought \$5 billion to the State  
17 of New York, working in partnership with IBM,  
18 Applied Materials and Cree. We've increased  
19 our research expenditures \$136 million. We  
20 will reach, we believe, in 2019 more than  
21 \$1.7 billion. I set a goal, when I first  
22 became chancellor two and a half years ago,  
23 of reaching \$2 billion.

24 And then with 42 seconds left, just

1           let me conclude that we're excited about the  
2           SUNY Global Cannabis Center in the Governor's  
3           budget. We are excited about the Education  
4           Opportunity Programs, the EOCs and the  
5           Attains.

6                     And we ask that you consider restoring  
7           the community college funding floor,  
8           restoring the childcare at community  
9           colleges, our Mental Health Tele-Counseling,  
10          the Small Business Development Centers work,  
11          our graduate diversity fellowships, and  
12          support for all our graduate students, the  
13          Hispanic Leadership Institute, and continue  
14          support for our hospitals.

15                    I would like to thank you for inviting  
16          me here to testify, and with that I will  
17          conclude.

18                    (Timeclock chiming.)

19                    CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Perfect.

20                    (Laughter.)

21                    CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Let that be a  
22          lesson to all here.

23                    We've been joined by Assemblywoman  
24          Seawright.

1                   And we go to our Higher Education  
2 chair, Deborah Glick, for some questions.

3                   CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: We've also been  
4 joined by Robert Jackson in the Senate.

5                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Thank you very  
6 much.

7                   Chancellor, appreciate your testimony.

8                   The budget -- the Executive Budget  
9 calls for regular annual increases in  
10 tuition, authorizing regular annual increases  
11 of \$200 per year through the year of  
12 2024-2025.

13                   If we agree to that, what does the  
14 final tuition wind up being? And with that  
15 escalation, what would be the impact on the  
16 TAP gap that the university is already  
17 struggling with? As we increase tuition, we  
18 increase the TAP gap. And so that seems like  
19 it is almost ice in winter.

20                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Thank you very  
21 much for your question.

22                   So an increase of \$200 per year for  
23 the next four years would be \$800, on top --  
24 at our state-operated institutions, the

1           tuition right now is \$7070, so that would be  
2           \$7870.

3                     The TAP gap right now is \$1905. So  
4           adding 800 to that, that would be 2700 for  
5           the TAP gap. Right now the cumulative TAP  
6           gap -- we have about 100,000 students  
7           getting -- mostly full-time students getting  
8           TAP support. It's about 82 million. So this  
9           would increase -- that's the TAP gap, the gap  
10          between what our campuses need to educate a  
11          student and what the tuition pays.

12                    So it would be, just bottom line,  
13          \$2700. It would increase the TAP gap unless  
14          we got some sort of relief.

15                    ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: I'm sorry, what  
16          was that?

17                    CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Unless we got  
18          some sort of relief, it would be \$2705.

19                    ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: And you already  
20          have some built-up TAP gap on the books.  
21          What is that at the --

22                    CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: That's \$1905 at  
23          the state-operated. I want to be clear, at  
24          the state-operated, where the tuition is 7070

1 and the TAP support is 5165. So the  
2 difference is every student on TAP has a gap  
3 that the campuses need to pay.

4 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: We know what  
5 that is, it would be -- rather than by  
6 student, what is the current burden?

7 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Eighty-two  
8 million.

9 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Eighty-two  
10 million, thank you.

11 And you indicated that you have 10,294  
12 EOP students.

13 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Right.

14 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Those students  
15 come from families with an average of \$21,000  
16 in family income. How many applications do  
17 you get for those spots that you obviously  
18 don't have room for?

19 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Right. So we get  
20 12,000 applications a year, and we have room  
21 for 4,000 students.

22 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Okay. Now, the  
23 Governor is proposing to expand Excelsior,  
24 which is viewed as a completion program. I

1 think TAP is viewed as a completion program  
2 too, since it's only available for eight  
3 semesters. From my perspective, it's a  
4 completion program. Even though you can be  
5 viewed as full-time even if you're carrying  
6 12 credits, you wind up on your own if you  
7 don't graduate on time. So -- which of  
8 course I didn't, so -- not that I was  
9 eligible for TAP, but ...

10 The Governor's proposal for increasing  
11 Excelsior to \$150,000 of household income --  
12 and that tuition would be frozen. So the  
13 system gets a student in, and their tuition  
14 stays the same for the four years. Other  
15 students, who for whatever reason -- work or  
16 whatever -- can't carry 30 credits a year,  
17 they pay an extra \$200 in tuition.

18 And the difference between those  
19 students -- now, the students who are in EOP,  
20 they generally graduate at the same or better  
21 rate than students who come in without. What  
22 is that graduation rate, do you know offhand?

23 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: I do. It's  
24 actually higher. I will get the exact

1           number, but it's roughly -- I want to say  
2           78 percent for the state-operated, compared  
3           to 71 percent. But I'll make sure you get  
4           the right -- the exact numbers.

5                     ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: I appreciate  
6           that.

7                     So we have a fairly high completion  
8           rate from families that are making \$21,000,  
9           with the additional supports that they get.  
10          And now we're suggesting that students who  
11          are kind of in the middle get tuition  
12          increases, but not the families that are up  
13          to \$125,000, \$150,000. Does that seem that  
14          there may be a better use of those resources?

15                    CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So I think the  
16          opportunity to increase the aid to all  
17          students attending SUNY would be welcome.  
18          And there's many different ways, as you  
19          mentioned, that we do that -- with EOP, with  
20          TAP, with the PTS program, with Excelsior.  
21          And now expanding Excelsior will allow more  
22          students to go with less debt.

23                    We would be grateful for any increase  
24          in EOP and some of the other support programs

1 as well.

2 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Thank you.

3 The Governor has repeated his -- the  
4 critical maintenance piece from last year.  
5 At this point, what's the -- that's  
6 \$550 million. Do you have a backlog in  
7 critical maintenance across the system? And  
8 will the 550 actually meet the need?

9 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: We do have a  
10 backlog. The 550 is part of a five-year  
11 plan. So that's very helpful, and we're very  
12 appreciative to the Governor and the  
13 Legislature for giving us a multiyear  
14 critical maintenance plan.

15 We estimate that probably to take care  
16 of the backlog in a timely manner for our  
17 roughly 850 state-owned-and-operated  
18 buildings that we take care of, we probably  
19 need a few hundred million more per year. So  
20 we are looking for something in the 750 to  
21 850 range.

22 What we're very excited about is the  
23 opportunity to have appropriations for new  
24 construction, because several of our

1 campuses are bursting at the seams for the  
2 high-demand sort of STEAM and STEM programs.  
3 So we're very thrilled about the opportunity  
4 to have new construction.

5 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: And speaking of  
6 the new capital, it seems to be somewhat of a  
7 matching program. How do you envision being  
8 able to make full use of the dollars that are  
9 available if there is in fact a match  
10 required? What's been the record for SUNY  
11 being able to attract those capital dollars?

12 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So there's  
13 several different ways that we could come up  
14 with the match. So I know you all know this:  
15 It's 300 million, 200 million from the state  
16 and 100 million from the individual campuses.  
17 Now, that could be in the form of  
18 philanthropy dollars, it can be in the form  
19 of reserves, it can be in the form of  
20 dollars, we believe, supplied by some of the  
21 auxiliary operations. So -- as well as  
22 savings.

23 We have launched, in anticipation of  
24 being able to develop those sort of resources

1 through efficiencies, for example, a print  
2 initiative, a print conservation. We believe  
3 we can take 25 million out of the costs,  
4 across SUNY, of printer and paper and toners  
5 from printing. And so we're really going to  
6 push this electronic initiative. I believe  
7 we'll be as successful as we were with the  
8 Open Education Resources, where we are saving  
9 our students 47 million.

10 So I think it's a combination of  
11 efficiencies, philanthropy, reserves, and  
12 other resources from our campuses to come up  
13 with that particular match.

14 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: In view of the  
15 fact that 40 percent of the state buildings  
16 are in fact SUNY buildings, how much need is  
17 there? So if we're looking at you having to  
18 come up with 100 million and this year  
19 300 million would be available, what is the  
20 real need?

21 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So I think it's a  
22 two-part answer, if I may.

23 One is there's a need every year for  
24 about 300 million of new construction. The

1 important thing is to be able to plan over a  
2 larger horizon. So we'd be very excited  
3 about, just like the critical maintenance,  
4 having a multiyear of the -- 550 a year for  
5 five years, is to be able to have the  
6 300 million per year for five years would be  
7 a billion from the state and we'd be raising  
8 a third of that on top of it.

9 So it's two things. One is we  
10 probably need about a billion dollars over  
11 five years from the state, and we need to  
12 match that with about 330 million.

13 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Thank you.

14 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Thank you.

15 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Before we go to  
16 the Senate, I just wanted to acknowledge  
17 we've been joined by Assemblywoman Lifton,  
18 Assemblywoman Buttenschon, and Assemblywoman  
19 Simon.

20 Now to the Senate.

21 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

22 The chair of Higher Ed, Toby Stavisky.

23 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

24 Thank you, Chancellor, for your

1 service. We certainly appreciate your  
2 enthusiasm and dedication and background.  
3 It's I think going to be a great relationship  
4 between you -- I know you've been here  
5 several years, but it's I think going to be a  
6 positive relationship.

7 Let me ask you a couple of questions.  
8 You spoke about the various programs. What  
9 is the university spending on remediation for  
10 those students who are not able to provide  
11 the necessary background for admission?

12 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So we've really  
13 put a lot of effort into helping get students  
14 ready for college. And give me just a minute  
15 to explain what I mean by that.

16 If you go back to 2014-2015, there was  
17 about 77,000 of our students -- so think  
18 about that, on a base of roughly 450,000 at  
19 that time -- 77,000, almost 80, out of 450  
20 that required some sort of remediation. And  
21 at that time the way we determined that was  
22 the students would come in and they'd take an  
23 exam. And based on that one piece of  
24 information we'd put folks into --

1 individuals into our remediation math or  
2 remediation English.

3 And as I said in my State of the  
4 University System, how more discouraging can  
5 that be than to have to go back and repeat?  
6 And it's not credit-bearing.

7 So working with the leadership of  
8 Johanna Duncan-Poitier, who's here, and the  
9 campus presidents, and the coalition of the  
10 willing, we have grown a corequisite English  
11 and a math. So we've changed the way we look  
12 at this. We say, okay, in English you're  
13 going to go into a credit-bearing course but  
14 we're going to provide non-credit-bearing,  
15 another unit of non-credit-bearing but help  
16 with preparing for English.

17 And here's what we found. This is  
18 really fascinating. It turns out that if you  
19 set the expectation that you will be able to  
20 pass a credit-bearing course and you provide  
21 the resources, we're finding that those  
22 students actually pass that class faster and  
23 on the first try.

24 So today, instead of 77,000 students

1 going into remediation, we have less than  
2 40,000 students. I think last year it was  
3 44,000, now we're down to 39,000. I believe  
4 there will come a time when that is something  
5 that is -- we'll either figure out something  
6 even better to do than the corequisite model  
7 that's working, or that model will take care  
8 of the math and the English.

9 Now, you can do an estimate -- and I  
10 tried to do an estimate just now kind of off  
11 the top of my head -- what that means if  
12 you're providing that extra instructional  
13 support. So if you'd allow me to not give  
14 you a number now off the top of my head, but  
15 we'll come back with you, we'll get together  
16 with the team and noodle out what that is  
17 costing us.

18 SENATOR STAVISKY: That was my -- the  
19 second part of the question, obviously, was  
20 the price tag.

21 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Yeah.

22 SENATOR STAVISKY: I know it's  
23 preferable to have classes taught by  
24 full-time experienced faculty. But

1           unfortunately, colleges have to rely on  
2           part-time or adjunct faculty.

3                        Can you tell us the percentage of  
4           adjuncts who are teaching, let's say at the  
5           four year colleges?

6                        CHANCELLOR JOHNSON:  Yup.  Yes.  So if  
7           I could start with the top-line number and  
8           then I'll disaggregate the data.

9                        So it's 50.6 percent of our faculty  
10          are adjuncts.  That's up.  If you look at the  
11          four-years, the comprehensives and the tech,  
12          it's almost 50 percent exactly.  It's like  
13          49.6 percent.  If you look at the doctoral  
14          and the community colleges, they're almost  
15          flipped.  What do I mean by that?  The  
16          doctoral are basically 71.5 percent -- just  
17          call it 70 percent for round numbers --  
18          full-time, 30 percent adjunct.  Community  
19          colleges are just flipped, they're 30 percent  
20          full-time, 70 percent adjunct.

21                        SENATOR STAVISKY:  And what about the  
22          community colleges?

23                        CHANCELLOR JOHNSON:  And that's the  
24          community colleges, I'm sorry, 30 percent

1 full-time and 70 percent part-time.

2 That's interesting, right? I mean,  
3 it's ...

4 SENATOR STAVISKY: About a year ago an  
5 article appeared in the Times Union  
6 discussing the question of the Confucius  
7 Institute at the University at Albany. And  
8 at the time the article -- the reporter had  
9 called me, it was Rick Karlin, and I said  
10 we've got to check into the situation.

11 And then Sunday the Daily News had an  
12 op-ed by a SUNY professor outlining the  
13 dangers -- and I thought it was a fairly  
14 balanced article. It presented the arguments  
15 both for and against the Confucius Institute.  
16 And in fairness, this is a nationwide program  
17 by the government of the People's Republic of  
18 China. It's been -- I happen to support, as  
19 you know, international programs, and I think  
20 they are excellent.

21 But could you explain or respond to  
22 some of the questions concerning academic  
23 freedom, First Amendment, and all of the  
24 other issues that have been raised?

1                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Certainly.

2                   So this is something that I started  
3                   looking into when I first became chancellor.  
4                   And I looked into it for several reasons. I  
5                   think one of the reasons it's coming up now  
6                   is the concern, as you mentioned, about  
7                   academic freedom, transparency, and being  
8                   open about what's going on where. All very  
9                   valid and very important.

10                  At the same time I was asked to go to  
11                  Washington to join in classified briefings --  
12                  of which I will not, obviously, divulge any  
13                  of the briefing -- but with senators, and to  
14                  learn about what their concerns are. And I  
15                  also made some recommendations in the general  
16                  area of intellectual property protection.

17                  So this is something that we have been  
18                  thinking about and working on for a couple of  
19                  years. Turns out we have six Confucius  
20                  Institutes. Some of the information in the  
21                  article wasn't accurate, we'll correct that.  
22                  There is no longer a Confucius Institute at  
23                  SUNY Global, but that is being -- pending a  
24                  move to Nassau Community College. So there

1           are still six.

2                     We are reviewing each one of the  
3           contracts. We want to ensure that if we do  
4           continue, which is contemplated at some of  
5           them, that we'll be transparent, you'll know  
6           what is being funded by when and the faculty  
7           members have control over the content and the  
8           curriculum, which was one of the main issues.

9                     And it's really an issue -- as a  
10          chancellor of the State University of  
11          New York, you want to make sure your faculty  
12          owns the curriculum, owns the content in  
13          their classroom. And that's federal law,  
14          that's SUNY policy, and that's the way those  
15          particular contracts will read.

16                    SENATOR STAVISKY: I was particularly  
17          troubled when I read -- and perhaps it was  
18          inaccurate -- that the contract between the  
19          Confucius Institute at Binghamton was not  
20          with the university, but with the Research  
21          Foundation.

22                    CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Right.

23                    SENATOR STAVISKY: Would you comment  
24          on that? Because I think there's certainly a

1           lack of -- the Research Foundation is far  
2           better than it was when I first joined the  
3           Legislature, and in fact asked questions at  
4           the budget hearing about 10 years ago. It is  
5           far better, but it's still very -- to me,  
6           very troubling.

7                        CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So the Research  
8           Foundation, as you know, was established I  
9           think in 1977 to support the -- maybe '57,  
10          one of those "seven" years -- to support the  
11          research enterprise of the State University  
12          of New York and to monitor and to track. And  
13          we have put in place in the last few years a  
14          very strong board, on which SUNY has  
15          representation, and they monitor and manage  
16          all of our research contracts.

17                       So because these contracts have to do  
18          with international exchange and they are a  
19          funded research contract, that would be the  
20          vehicle by which SUNY engages in any contract  
21          with anyone, is through the Research  
22          Foundation.

23                       Having said that, I just want to  
24          reiterate, we are going to be open,

1 transparent, and make sure that we account --  
2 and we'll be glad to get back to you with all  
3 the funding that's going through the Research  
4 Foundation, in particular for the Confucius  
5 Institutes.

6 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

7 One last quick question. I received a  
8 memo from the University Police, and it was  
9 troubling because of the attrition, the fact  
10 that we spend time and money training these  
11 officers and they leave. And there are --  
12 apparently they have some issues with the  
13 university, and I think you ought to have an  
14 opportunity to respond.

15 Have you seen the --

16 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: I have not. But  
17 I'd be more than happy to receive the letter.

18 SENATOR STAVISKY: We'll provide you  
19 with a copy. Oh, you'll hear their  
20 testimony, I think, today. But I will  
21 provide you with a copy.

22 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Great. Thank  
23 you.

24 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

1                   CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

2                   We've been joined by Assemblywoman  
3 Bichotte, Assemblyman Fall. And we go to  
4 Assemblyman Epstein for questions.

5                   ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Thank you.

6                   And thank you for being with us today.  
7 I do appreciate your testimony. But I just  
8 have some real concerns about what you're  
9 proposing. And just, you know, along those  
10 lines with Assemblywoman Glick was talking  
11 about where we're seeing so much food  
12 insecurity on our campuses, people struggling  
13 to make ends meet, people going part-time  
14 because they can't afford to continue to go  
15 to school -- and then we're making choices  
16 around expanding Excelsior but cutting other  
17 programs where students have much greater  
18 need.

19                   And I'm wondering what the logic is to  
20 expand a program from 125 to 150 when we see  
21 students who can't afford the tuition  
22 increase that we're proposing, students who  
23 tell us every day they can't drop out. My  
24 daughter attends a SUNY, and there are so

1 many friends of hers who will not be able to  
2 eat each month on campus because they don't  
3 have the resources.

4 So I'm just concerned around this  
5 choice. And why not expand the EOP programs?  
6 Why not put resources for people who have  
7 deeper need? Why not get from a thousand to  
8 5,000 for those people we know it will make a  
9 difference in their lives. And that we -- we  
10 talked about getting people at lower economic  
11 situations to higher, that's an exact  
12 opportunity to do it. And I'm just not --  
13 I'm baffled, really, by the choices here.

14 So I'd love to hear what the logic is  
15 to making these choices around expanding  
16 Excelsior but not really expanding for  
17 programs with deeper needs and students who  
18 are struggling on our campuses every day.

19 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So, first of all,  
20 thank you very much for the question. And  
21 look, it resonates with me, being able to go  
22 to college and come out debt-free. Because I  
23 went to university on a full scholarship,  
24 both tuition and room and board. I could not

1 have gone otherwise. So you're speaking  
2 exactly to this kid 40 years ago.

3 That said, I don't think we need to  
4 make a choice between one or the other. I  
5 think we need to do it all. And I think I  
6 was -- well, we were all thrilled that the  
7 EOP program, the EOC program and the Attain  
8 programs were all continued in the Executive  
9 Budget. So I think that's showing the  
10 Governor's strong support for exactly the  
11 individuals that you're talking about that we  
12 care greatly about. And I would love to see  
13 those programs increased.

14 At the same time we have a lot of need  
15 for students -- you know, depending on where  
16 you live, those levels are meaningful and are  
17 challenging. Going to food insecurity,  
18 that's exactly why we put a food pantry or  
19 access to a food pantry -- and I've visited  
20 many of these, in fact, and they're  
21 wonderful. In fact at many of our campuses  
22 they're run by students, which is just  
23 awesome.

24 So we need to continue to be vigilant.

1 We need to continue to bring resources to  
2 SUNY. And that's why, you know, I'm quite  
3 interested -- one of my top priorities is  
4 really philanthropy and helping our campuses  
5 or working very hard to bring outside  
6 resources to bear for our campuses so that we  
7 can continue to create the kind of programs  
8 we need if we're going to be that social  
9 mobility engine.

10 And that's, I think, the thing that's  
11 quite interesting now. When we look at the  
12 cost of educating the student -- and I said  
13 this in my testimony, but I think it bears  
14 repeating, if I do say so myself -- 18.3 new  
15 net jobs created since we started emerging  
16 from the Great Recession 10 years ago, 18.3.  
17 Eighteen of those went to individuals with  
18 some kind of college education. And more  
19 than that, 2 million jobs that were there for  
20 students who only had a high school education  
21 vanished.

22 So everyone needs a college degree.  
23 Everybody has to have access to this. We  
24 have to support all our students going

1 forward and particularly, of course, the most  
2 vulnerable. I can't tell you how awesome it  
3 was to go to that ceremony and see 42  
4 outstanding students that had special needs,  
5 families struggling, and were doing  
6 fabulously because of the support of the EOP  
7 program.

8 So I support what you're saying. We  
9 should increase --

10 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Good, I would  
11 love to see ways to expand that.

12 Same thing when we passed the DREAM  
13 Act. And I know a lot of students have  
14 applied. How many students have applied for  
15 DREAM and TAP funding, how many students  
16 applied versus how many got it? It would be  
17 great to know what the differential is and  
18 what's going on there.

19 And the last thing I'll raise, because  
20 I know I'm out of time, is I would love to  
21 see dedicated funding streams for CUNY and  
22 SUNY. I'd love to see real dollars going.  
23 And I know we have a concern about additional  
24 revenue, but we've got to close that TAP gap,

1           because we need to do that.

2                     And we'd love to see you partner with  
3           us to -- I've got legislation and other  
4           people have legislation to direct funding to  
5           CUNY and SUNY. And we just need to have  
6           dedicated funding streams, because we're  
7           going to be in this fight where we expand the  
8           TAP gap every year with tuition increases as  
9           you're proposing.

10                    CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Totally agree.

11           And in fact if I may just --

12                     (Timeclock chirping.)

13                    CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Sure.

14                    CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Can I? May I,  
15           Chairpersons? Okay.

16                     I think that there's even something  
17           more we need to do. Because I think that  
18           it's not good enough now just to educate  
19           students in the kind of fields that they love  
20           and aspire -- which we need to do that. We  
21           also need to layer on top of that  
22           entrepreneurship, innovation, the way that we  
23           can help. When you've got a SUNY -- I mean,  
24           this is, I think, the big idea. Right?

1           It's -- you've got a SUNY campus with an --  
2           almost 90 percent of every New Yorker within  
3           30 miles. And we have this outmigration from  
4           upstate to downstate. Right? We all know  
5           this. And the Governor has put together the  
6           REDCs to get at that.

7                     Now, imagine that the students -- you  
8           know, I said during my testimony that  
9           75 percent after three to four years are  
10          still living in the State of New York.  
11          Suppose we unleash their innovation, their  
12          entrepreneurship, and we help them stay in  
13          place and create those companies. It would  
14          be phenomenal.

15                    And I highlighted one of those at the  
16          SOTUS, which is Ben Conard, who did Five  
17          North Chocolate. He learned about  
18          entrepreneurship at Geneseo; he's using a  
19          kitchen at Stony Brook. That's what we need  
20          to unleash in this state, and we can do it.  
21          With a little more support.

22                    CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

23                    We've been joined by Assemblyman  
24          McDonald.

1 Now to the Senate.

2 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

3 Next, Jim Seward, ranker on Finance.

4 SENATOR SEWARD: Thank you,

5 Madam Chair.

6 And thank you, Chancellor. It's been  
7 a real pleasure working with you since you  
8 came here to New York and the SUNY system, on  
9 behalf of the many SUNY campuses I have in my  
10 district and the system as a whole.

11 I wanted to return to a discussion of  
12 the proposed tuition authorization hikes that  
13 are included in the budget. How much revenue  
14 will be generated if these proposed tuition  
15 increases are implemented?

16 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So for every \$100  
17 increase in tuition, the net, net of the TAP  
18 gap and Excelsior, is about \$9 million. So a  
19 \$200 increase would generate about  
20 \$18 million net each year.

21 SENATOR SEWARD: Per year.

22 You know, with the proposed increase  
23 in the income eligibility for the Excelsior  
24 scholarship, and with these proposed tuition

1           hikes only being paid by non-Excelsior  
2           students, what percentage of SUNY students  
3           will actually be paying the increase? Do you  
4           know offhand?

5                    CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So I don't know  
6           offhand, but we'll get back to you on that.  
7           We can calculate it.

8                    And the reason why is in part, as you  
9           know, Excelsior is the last dollar. And so  
10          when it looks to increase, you need to back  
11          out students that would be eligible for TAP,  
12          students that would be eligible for  
13          Excelsior. You know, we just have to do a  
14          little bit of sharpening a pencil.

15                   SENATOR SEWARD: Do you have any  
16          concerns -- for those students who do not  
17          qualify for Excelsior, do you have any  
18          concerns about as the tuition goes up, that  
19          their average student loan debt will also go  
20          up upon graduation?

21                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Well, we're very  
22          concerned about, you know, the debt of our  
23          students.

24                   And you may know this, but the average

1 debt -- so half of our students graduated  
2 debt-free, roughly -- 47.3 percent. Call it  
3 a half for now. The other students, on  
4 average, will have upwards about 27K in debt  
5 when they graduate, like on average.

6 So we're very concerned about that.  
7 We want to keep a SUNY education -- you know,  
8 it's a balancing act -- affordable but also  
9 high quality. And that's where, you know,  
10 the support is so -- you know, so appreciated  
11 from the Legislature and the Governor to be  
12 able to do that.

13 SENATOR SEWARD: I wanted to shift  
14 gears to the community colleges. You know,  
15 last year the enacted budget included a  
16 hold-harmless provision to offset some of the  
17 enrollment declines on many of our community  
18 college campuses. And actually there was a  
19 base aid increase of \$100 as well.

20 Neither of these are included in the  
21 Executive's proposal. Do you have concerns  
22 about how our community college campuses are  
23 going to absorb both the flat base aid  
24 funding that's included in the budget as well

1 as dealing with anticipated loss of funding  
2 due to, you know, some additional projected  
3 enrollment declines?

4 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So of our  
5 415,000 -- that's head count -- students,  
6 192,000 are community college. So roughly  
7 half. A little less, but about half. So  
8 we're very concerned about that.

9 We would very much like to see the  
10 floor be put back in place, and that sort of  
11 the held harmless, as well as an increase in  
12 per-head count.

13 As I said earlier in the testimony,  
14 for many of our students this is the first  
15 entree into higher ed. And a lot of our  
16 students commute, so the real cost for them  
17 of education is tuition. And so it would be  
18 very helpful to re-look at the floor.

19 And, you know, the way I think I  
20 described it maybe even at last year's  
21 hearing was, you know, it's a little bit  
22 like -- there are base costs and variable  
23 costs of education. And I know you know all  
24 that. It's like going into a restaurant, you

1 know, and no matter if one person comes in  
2 the door or 10 go in the door, you've still  
3 got to pay the rent, you've got to keep the  
4 lights on, and you still have to have the --  
5 so those pay for the fixed costs. And that's  
6 what the floor helps us do.

7 And then the \$100 increase for some of  
8 our community colleges that are increasing,  
9 that helps them pay with -- you know, like  
10 the salad and the main course and all that,  
11 which is more variable.

12 So we really think that it was a  
13 terrific vision and insight from the  
14 Legislature to put that in, and we'd be very  
15 grateful to see that restored.

16 SENATOR SEWARD: You would advocate  
17 that we do it again this year.

18 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: I'm sorry?

19 SENATOR SEWARD: You would advocate  
20 that we do that again this year.

21 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Yes.

22 SENATOR SEWARD: Just one final  
23 question on capital. You've outlined the  
24 great needs that still exist out there on the

1 various campuses. Do you have any concerns  
2 about that two-for-one matching program  
3 that's in the budget that there will be,  
4 shall we say an uneven availability of these  
5 capital funds depending on whether or not a  
6 campus could meet the match?

7 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So we are looking  
8 very carefully at each and every campus to  
9 see what the ability is to do the match. We  
10 do believe that the majority of our campuses  
11 will be able to do that. In fact, the great  
12 majority of our campuses will be able to do a  
13 match from a variety of sources, whether it's  
14 philanthropy or reserves or auxiliary  
15 services or help from the SUNY system.

16 And so we look forward to working with  
17 the campuses to get the new construction, you  
18 know, moving that we really need for some of  
19 these high-need programs.

20 SENATOR SEWARD: Thank you.

21 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.  
22 Assembly.

23 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We've been  
24 joined by Assemblywoman Hyndman.

1                   And we go to Assemblywoman Lifton.

2                   CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: And we've been  
3 joined by Senator Rachel May.

4                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN LIFTON: Good morning,  
5 Chancellor.

6                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Good morning.

7                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN LIFTON: I want to just  
8 second the concerns about the childcare  
9 centers on campus, Small Business Development  
10 Centers, the Veterinary College at Cornell,  
11 all very important investments for the state  
12 and critical for people attending both two-  
13 and four-year colleges.

14                   I was glad to hear Senator Stavisky  
15 talk about the full-time versus adjunct  
16 faculty issue. As the daughter of a SUNY  
17 professor and --

18                   CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Can you talk  
19 more into the -- or pull the mic a little  
20 closer?

21                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN LIFTON: -- and a leader  
22 in SUNY for many years, secretary of the  
23 State Faculty Senate many years ago, he would  
24 not be happy if I didn't ask further about

1           that.

2                     You know, we did the tuition increases  
3           over how many years, we did the rational  
4           tuition policy increases that were four  
5           years. And I think we were sure that that  
6           was going to work to improve the education  
7           for students. That was going to go towards  
8           improving the quality of students' education.

9                     I have to assume you would agree that  
10          having full-time faculty and having good  
11          numbers there would be an important piece of  
12          that. And I know this is -- I'm not laying  
13          this at your doorstep, I lay it very much at  
14          the state government's doorstep in terms of  
15          support for SUNY. But -- and we're talking  
16          about another tuition increase. Is it just  
17          holding even? Is it talking about progress?  
18          And, you know, 50 percent adjunct faculty is  
19          not a great number. I was told eight years  
20          ago, six years ago, five years ago that we  
21          are working on it, we are improving it, we  
22          are improving it. And these don't look like  
23          improved numbers to me at all.

24                     Do you have goals on that? Do you

1           have a plan, given -- you know, if that  
2           tuition increase comes through here, is some  
3           of that going to go towards truly -- not just  
4           wishful thinking, but truly looking at the  
5           issue of full-time versus adjunct faculty?

6                    CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Well, first of  
7           all, thank you very much for the question.

8                    Absolutely, I would love to see more  
9           full-time faculty. Because when you have  
10          full-time faculty, they're full-time. So you  
11          get extra -- the benefit of someone that's  
12          there often for the mentoring and the office  
13          hours and those sort of things. Although I  
14          must say that our adjunct faculty are very  
15          dedicated as well. And so converting some of  
16          those positions to full-time would be a goal.

17                   What I'd like to do is come back and  
18          look at the history and look at what progress  
19          we have made. I know through some of the  
20          innovation fund that I mentioned earlier, we  
21          are actually using those funds to attract  
22          full-time faculty.

23                   Also something that I noticed my first  
24          semester here at SUNY is that, you know,

1            somewhere between a third and 40 percent of  
2            our faculty could retire over the horizon of  
3            when I'm chancellor. So therefore we have  
4            initiated a program called PRODiG, as you may  
5            have heard about, where we've set a goal to  
6            hire a thousand underrepresented minority and  
7            women faculty over the next decade. And we  
8            want to hire them early so that they can  
9            learn from the existing faculty and  
10           understand -- you know, get mentored at that  
11           time.

12                        So we think it's a really important  
13           program. It's gotten off to a great start in  
14           the first six months. I mean, we announced  
15           it at the SOTUS last January, we started to  
16           stand it up with workshops in March, and then  
17           proposals were due in July. So we're really  
18           in the first six months of this. But we've  
19           already hired 74 faculty through PRODiG, and  
20           we expect that we'll be able to increase  
21           that.

22                        So this is a big focus of mine, not  
23           just the -- it's demographics writ large.  
24           It's the do our students that are 35 percent

1 underrepresented minority, are they seeing  
2 someone in the classroom that looks like  
3 them? So that they see it, they can be it.  
4 Well, when you only have 9 percent of your  
5 faculty underrepresented minorities, they're  
6 not seeing it, as much as we think that it  
7 would be helpful.

8 So that's one reason why we launched  
9 this. We've put a number out there, a  
10 thousand over a decade. We don't think it's  
11 too aggressive. We will accomplish that.  
12 And so, yes, faculty and supporting our  
13 faculty is one of the highest priorities you  
14 can possibly have as a leader in the  
15 institution.

16 ASSEMBLYWOMAN LIFTON: Of course I  
17 support that program. It sounds like a very  
18 important program to be doing. I know you've  
19 spoken about it before.

20 Are we going to see a bump up in those  
21 numbers from 50 percent to 55 percent or  
22 60 percent over the next five years,  
23 especially --

24 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So we are

1 about -- yeah. No, it's a good question.

2 ASSEMBLYWOMAN LIFTON: -- especially  
3 with a tuition increase?

4 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: And let me  
5 apologize, we should come back to that.

6 ASSEMBLYWOMAN LIFTON: That's all  
7 right.

8 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So if you look at  
9 the national averages, we are about 4 to  
10 5 percent lower than we should be. So I  
11 think last year we provided some information  
12 about what it would cost -- what it would  
13 take to move the numbers by 10 percent. I  
14 don't remember that number off the top of my  
15 head. But I -- then we looked at the data  
16 and we saw that really we're national average  
17 probably low -- more on the order of 4 or  
18 5 percent than 10.

19 So if it would be okay, we'll come  
20 back with an estimate on what it would cost  
21 and how that would work with a tuition  
22 increase from that.

23 ASSEMBLYWOMAN LIFTON: Thank you,  
24 Chancellor.

1                   CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

2                   To the Senate now.

3                   CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

4                   We've been joined by Senator Brad  
5                   Hoylman, and Senator John Liu is next up for  
6                   questions.

7                   SENATOR LIU: Thank you, Madam Chair.

8                   Chancellor, we've got issues. Oh, I  
9                   apologize. I'm a proud graduate of SUNY  
10                  Binghamton.

11                  We have issues, Chancellor. And the  
12                  issue is that we're not -- we're not  
13                  investing enough money in this state for  
14                  education. There's a great deal of focus on  
15                  I guess what some people call lower  
16                  education, the elementary through high school  
17                  education, and the need for more Foundation  
18                  Aid. But it's clear that we also need more  
19                  money for our higher education, both SUNY and  
20                  CUNY.

21                  I have some questions because, you  
22                  know, it's been difficult to get some very  
23                  clear numbers out there. So perhaps you  
24                  would have them off the top of your head.

1 And if not, then you can ask your staff to  
2 follow up with me.

3 But basically, what's the total  
4 operating budget of SUNY, the whole system?

5 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: The whole system.  
6 I think it's around 3, 3.5 billion? Eileen?

7 SUNY CFO McLOUGHLIN: {Inaudible.}  
8 Thirteen billion.

9 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Yeah, 13 billion.

10 SENATOR LIU: Yeah, 13 billion. And  
11 how much of that is state support versus  
12 tuition?

13 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: I think that's  
14 the number that's about 3.5.

15 SUNY CFO McLOUGHLIN: Thirty percent.

16 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Thirty percent.  
17 So it's about 3.9 billion, direct and  
18 indirect.

19 SENATOR LIU: Yeah, that's very close.  
20 I mean, I've got a chart here that says state  
21 support is 32 percent, and the remaining  
22 68 percent is supported by tuition.

23 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Right.

24 SUNY CFO McLOUGHLIN: {Inaudible.}

1                   SENATOR LIU: Right, that's a --  
2                   what's that?

3                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: In-hospital  
4                   revenues, patient visits and so forth.

5                   SENATOR LIU: Okay. But that's a  
6                   small amount, right?

7                   (Overtalk; inaudible.)

8                   SENATOR LIU: Twenty-five -- so it's  
9                   25 percent hospital revenues, 32 percent  
10                  state support and the remaining 43 percent  
11                  would be tuition?

12                  SUNY CFO McLOUGHLIN: Tuition, fees,  
13                  yes.

14                  CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Tuition, fees.  
15                  Would some of that be auxiliary services too?

16                  SUNY CFO McLOUGHLIN: It's in the  
17                  fees.

18                  CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Yeah, it's in the  
19                  fees, okay.

20                  SENATOR LIU: And that 43 percent from  
21                  tuition and fees is much higher -- it's a  
22                  much higher percentage than it was perhaps 10  
23                  years ago.

24                  CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: We can look that

1 up. I don't know that number off the top --

2 SENATOR LIU: Okay. Well, I mean, I  
3 don't -- I have some numbers here. It says  
4 here that the state support was 46 percent  
5 nine years ago. So it's down to 32 percent.  
6 So we're clearly -- I mean, the state is just  
7 not coughing up where it should. And that's  
8 not your fault, Chancellor, I'm just putting  
9 it out there.

10 So what do you think the trajectory is  
11 with these tuition increases? Is it -- with  
12 the tuition increases, is it even going to be  
13 more than 43 percent tuition-supported? Is  
14 it -- is more than 43 percent -- is even more  
15 than 43 percent of the SUNY operating costs  
16 going to be paid for by student tuition and  
17 fees? And what's the trajectory here?

18 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: I think the  
19 trajectory will depend, you know, on some of  
20 the ways that we can work together to improve  
21 not just -- actually, to create new revenue  
22 streams. So that's one of the reasons why  
23 I'm really pushing philanthropy. It's  
24 another reason why we are working at SUNY

1 Online, which is our online platform, to  
2 launch that.

3 Because if you look at the  
4 trajectory -- and we've done this in great  
5 detail. From where we are now with 415,000  
6 students in 2020 to where we're going to be  
7 in 2025, if we don't have some sort of  
8 intervention with regard to garnering more  
9 out-of-state students or increasing the  
10 number of students that go to higher ed in  
11 the state, or through our online platform,  
12 then we will be down probably tens of  
13 thousands of more students.

14 Which will be harder to make up with  
15 tuition and fees if you're losing, you know,  
16 enrollment. So enrollment is a laser focus  
17 for us right now as well.

18 SENATOR LIU: You're -- you're afraid  
19 that enrollment will decline?

20 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Well, you see  
21 that for the first time, I think over the  
22 last four years it's -- actually, over the  
23 last 40 years there's been outmigration from  
24 the state. I mean, this is not a new

1           phenomenon. The state has been losing  
2           population, and it isn't being offset by  
3           immigration and new natural births. So we  
4           are having a statewide, you know, decline in  
5           population.

6                        SENATOR LIU: But tuition is being  
7           increased not to make up for a declining or  
8           at least a flat level of enrollment, right?  
9           Tuition is being increased because of  
10          increased operating costs.

11                      It just feels like the tuition  
12          increases are higher than the increases in  
13          operating costs. Which is why that  
14          percentage keeps growing larger.

15                      CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So I think  
16          that -- I am very sensitive to increasing  
17          costs for our students. I think that one  
18          gets a little bit of a contextual view of  
19          that if we look at what's the tuition  
20          in-state at Connecticut, New Jersey,  
21          Pennsylvania, and our border states, our  
22          so-called border states. So it's about 4,000  
23          to \$5,000 more per year.

24                      SENATOR LIU: Okay. Thank you.

1                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So -- I mean, but  
2                   that's the real -- so our -- if we charged --  
3                   our out-of-state tuition is \$18,070. The  
4                   in-state tuition of our border states is  
5                   about 12,000. Which is about 5,000 more than  
6                   our in-state and about 5,000 less than our  
7                   out-of-state.

8                   SENATOR LIU: Regardless of whether  
9                   they're coming from in-state or out-of-state,  
10                  it's -- you said 75 percent of the graduates  
11                  do stay in New York.

12                  CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: That's right. So  
13                  we want to attract them to the state. And  
14                  SUNY can be that engine that attracts  
15                  students to the state because of outstanding  
16                  institutions like your alma mater.

17                  SENATOR LIU: And attract corporations  
18                  and employers. Thank you, Madam Chair.

19                  CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.  
20                  Assembly.

21                  CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.  
22                  We go to Assemblywoman Fahy.

23                  ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Thank you.  
24                  Thank you. A pleasure to see you and

1           have you here, Chancellor.

2                     A few things, not to repeat some of  
3           the questions, but I just -- one of the first  
4           questions and comments was on the TAP gap,  
5           and I just want to reiterate those concerns.  
6           I share the concerns that we really need to  
7           address that and hear it all the time, not  
8           just from the students, but also from the  
9           universities, so want to reiterate that.

10                    Also love the continued graduation  
11           rates and good feedback on the EOP program.  
12           So I just wish it was there for everybody  
13           that applied. So I want to also share in  
14           those comments and support for the EOP  
15           programs. I have to wonder why we're not  
16           doing a little more there.

17                    Finally, your comment on the  
18           credit-bearing courses is just -- that's  
19           really good news. For years we had heard  
20           about the remedial courses, we were losing  
21           students being saddled with remedial courses  
22           and then not making it or giving up on them.

23                    Couple of questions. In the community  
24           colleges, the cut -- can you explain the cut

1 and can you address the charge-back issue?  
2 There's a reduction of 22 million on the  
3 community colleges. Is that all due to  
4 enrollment? And do we know how that will  
5 affect Hudson Valley here?

6 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So the  
7 22 million, you're saying, without having the  
8 floor or an increase of \$100 per student,  
9 that will be a net of about 22 million.

10 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: That's what's in  
11 the books.

12 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So -- well, we're  
13 hoping that the floor will get reinstated.

14 And we'd also like to have an increase  
15 in the head count. So I will have to do some  
16 good work on advocacy to see if we can put  
17 back the floor.

18 I don't know how it will specifically  
19 impact Hudson Valley. Some of that will  
20 depend on enrollment. Some of that will  
21 depend on -- but we can certainly get you  
22 that information.

23 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Okay. And I'd  
24 love the update on the chargeback issue,

1           which becomes -- it's an annual issue I bring  
2           up between Rensselaer County and Albany  
3           County, and would appreciate the feedback on  
4           that, because Albany County gets hit and yet  
5           we have more students there at Hudson Valley,  
6           a terrific community college.

7                    CHANCELLOR JOHNSON:  If I could -- can  
8           I just say one thing on the chargeback?

9                    ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY:  Sure.

10                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON:  So we have put  
11           together a working group studying the  
12           chargeback, seeing how we might be able to be  
13           helpful there, and we can come back to you  
14           with where that is.

15                    That's one thing that I promised we  
16           would do last year at the hearing.

17                    ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY:  Okay.  And we've  
18           had working groups before on that, so I  
19           really am anxious to see the update.

20                    Childcare, that's been mentioned, the  
21           cut.  Serious concern.  Childcare is just a  
22           crisis throughout the state.

23                    CHANCELLOR JOHNSON:  Yes, absolutely.

24                    ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY:  And I was very

1 concerned to see that even we would cut that.  
2 I know that's been mentioned before, so I  
3 want to get that in.

4 Sustainability, along with capital  
5 funding. I know since you've been here,  
6 sustainability and energy efficiency of the  
7 SUNY buildings -- which I understand are  
8 40 percent of the state-owned buildings in  
9 the state. I know you keep mentioning it.  
10 I'm pleased that the Governor has proposed a  
11 \$200 million increase. Tell me how much that  
12 it is in comparison to what the needs would  
13 be.

14 As you know, I've talked before about  
15 expanding on the bond, the Environmental  
16 Bond Act, so that we can address SUNY and  
17 CUNY needs. But what do you need to get at  
18 this sustainability issue that I know you've  
19 championed since you've been here?

20 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Right. So we  
21 proposed -- we have 550 for critical  
22 maintenance. And last year we proposed an  
23 additional 200 a year in order -- the best  
24 time to do -- and I know you all know this,

1 but energy efficiency and upgrade is when  
2 you're doing critical maintenance. So if  
3 you're going to replace the roof anyway, then  
4 that's when you want to put in the  
5 insulation, because you're going to increase,  
6 you know, the better insulation because  
7 you're going to be having to replace it. So  
8 it's just more efficient to do it at that  
9 time.

10 So additional funding in order to  
11 address the energy efficiency through  
12 critical maintenance would be great. The  
13 match also allows us to get at the need for  
14 new construction.

15 So we have between, say -- well, I'll  
16 just say a couple of billion and I'll get  
17 back to you -- over a period of time like  
18 five years of new construction on the drawing  
19 board. So it's new engineering buildings,  
20 you know, at Stony Brook and at Albany and  
21 Buffalo and Binghamton. There are new  
22 buildings at the university centers. There's  
23 new buildings at Purchase. And then there's  
24 a renovation, which is more like a new

1 building, of the natural sciences at  
2 Old Westbury. We have tremendous needs in  
3 the STEM area and we need -- and it's on the  
4 order of billions over a period of time.

5 And it's that surety of knowing those  
6 fundings will be there year after year so  
7 that we can plan it, design it, construct it  
8 and move in. And that whole process can take  
9 four to five years. So having that support  
10 there is just very important.

11 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Okay, Chancellor,  
12 I really would love to hear more on this.  
13 I'm almost out of time. I'd be remiss if I  
14 didn't mention our own parochial need here in  
15 that engineering building at UAlbany. But  
16 I'd love to hear what the overall number is  
17 to get at this retrofitting and energy  
18 efficiency for the SUNY buildings. Because  
19 again, I think we need to go beyond what is  
20 proposed.

21 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: And we'll get  
22 back to you on that in detail.

23 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Okay, thank you.

24 Thank you, Madam Chair.

1 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

2 Senator Robert Jackson.

3 SENATOR JACKSON: Good morning,  
4 Chancellor.

5 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Good morning.

6 SENATOR JACKSON: It's always good to  
7 see you.

8 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: It's good to see  
9 you too.

10 SENATOR JACKSON: And I'm surprised  
11 you don't have other staff up there with you,  
12 but it appears as though you're so  
13 knowledgeable about the fact that -- the  
14 statistics that you're putting out. And I  
15 clearly believe you're a highly qualified  
16 professional doing the best job that you can.

17 But let me ask you a question. I'm  
18 looking at some of the highlights. So the  
19 Higher Education Services Corporation is  
20 being cut 5.3 percent. What impact is that  
21 going to have on children, young adults,  
22 getting into college, in your opinion?

23 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So HESC  
24 obviously, and I saw Guillermo here, supports

1 all of our Excelsior and supports many other  
2 programs such as STEM programs. And they're  
3 very important to the success of both SUNY  
4 and CUNY. So I --

5 SENATOR JACKSON: But it will have an  
6 impact, though. I would --

7 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Yes, it will.  
8 Yes, sir.

9 SENATOR JACKSON: What are they  
10 cutting, 64 what?

11 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: I'm not -- I  
12 don't know the exact number, but --

13 SENATOR JACKSON: Sixty-four million  
14 dollars, I think, out of an \$18 billion  
15 budget. Clearly it's going to have an impact  
16 when you're cutting that much money out. I  
17 mean, I'm looking at SUNY overall is an  
18 increase of 6.5 percent, is that correct?  
19 That's what it says here. Am I right or  
20 wrong?

21 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: SUNY overall  
22 would be 1.9 percent, we had requested in our  
23 budget, from base aid. I'm sure more than  
24 that, because of the benefits and the costs

1           there.

2                       SENATOR JACKSON:  So with respect to  
3           that, knowing this budget is -- a lot of talk  
4           was about tuition, so -- and there is a  
5           proposal on the table to continue the \$200  
6           per year for the next five years.  Would you  
7           be in favor of freezing it where it is now,  
8           with no increase, and let the State of  
9           New York pick up -- you said it's \$18 million  
10          per year, is that right, TAP?

11                      CHANCELLOR JOHNSON:  Eighteen million,  
12          that's net, yeah.  That's taking into account  
13          the gap.

14                      SENATOR JACKSON:  Okay, 18 million.  
15          But will you be willing to just charge no  
16          additional tuition for students coming in and  
17          the State of New York would just pick up that  
18          cost factor?  When you look at a \$178 billion  
19          budget, that's not a lot of money, would you  
20          agree?

21                      CHANCELLOR JOHNSON:  Sorry --

22                      SENATOR JACKSON:  That is not a lot of  
23          money to freeze it and just whatever the cost  
24          factor is, in order to continue to provide

1 the colleges and universities the monies that  
2 we'd get from normal tuition that students  
3 are paying for.

4 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: We certainly  
5 would love to work with you on exploring the  
6 ability to make SUNY even more affordable to  
7 our students as well as get the support we  
8 need for the ongoing operations, including  
9 the well-deserved and long overdue pay raises  
10 to our faculty and staff, our operations, and  
11 also putting in place the floor for the  
12 community colleges. So we would look forward  
13 to having a conversation.

14 SENATOR JACKSON: And talking about  
15 the operations and talking about staff, what  
16 is the situation with your unionized staff?  
17 I think your -- most of the staff at SUNY is  
18 represented by UUP, is that correct?

19 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: That's correct,  
20 yes.

21 SENATOR JACKSON: Has that contract  
22 expired? What's going on with that?

23 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: No, it was just  
24 renewed -- I think it was last year? And

1           therefore it's -- there is a retroactive  
2           piece for two years and then going forward  
3           for four years, and it's a 2 percent base and  
4           a 1 percent merit.

5                         SENATOR JACKSON:  And how was that  
6           covered in the budget process?  I mean, did  
7           the State of New York then give that  
8           additional money to cover that contract, or  
9           it would expect to be taken out of the hides  
10          of the colleges?

11                        CHANCELLOR JOHNSON:  Well, we would  
12          love to work with you to explore ways that we  
13          can make SUNY even more affordable.

14                        SENATOR JACKSON:  I understand.  I  
15          know you will -- I know you want to work with  
16          me.  I asked the question, was the -- did the  
17          State of New York pick up that and pay for  
18          that, or is it expected to come out of the  
19          hides of the colleges?  That's my question to  
20          you.  That's a direct question.

21                        CHANCELLOR JOHNSON:  Yeah.  The direct  
22          base aid has been flat over the last, I  
23          think, so many years.

24                        SENATOR JACKSON:  So in essence,

1           then, it has not been picked up by the  
2           government overall.

3                    CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Well, base aid  
4           has remained flat. But of course our debt  
5           service and our benefits are paid for, and  
6           we're very grateful for that, from the state,  
7           because that's an expensive -- as you know,  
8           the increase in the overall budget is, as you  
9           said, over 6 percent because of the increased  
10          costs and because of the debt service that  
11          we're very, very happy to receive.

12                   SENATOR JACKSON: But, I mean, you  
13          would say that all of your staff deserve a  
14          raise in order to live appropriately and --  
15          from a normal point of view, is that correct?

16                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: I do support our  
17          staff receiving raises, absolutely.

18                   SENATOR JACKSON: Uh-huh. So overall,  
19          from a capital point of view, my  
20          understanding in hearing all around that the  
21          capital amount of money needs to be  
22          increased. Do you agree with that or  
23          disagree with that? Or you have --

24                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: I believe there's

1           300 million in the Governor's budget for  
2           capital, and we're very excited about that.

3                   SENATOR JACKSON: You're what?

4                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: There's 300  
5           million in appropriations --

6                   SENATOR JACKSON: You said you're  
7           satisfied with that or you're happy about  
8           that?

9                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: I'm happy about  
10          that. Two hundred of that is new capital,  
11          and 100 of that is match from SUNY.

12                  SENATOR JACKSON: Well, I don't -- I'm  
13          not happy about that.

14                  CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Well, then I'm --  
15          okay.

16                   (Laughter.)

17                  CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: You get to remain  
18          unhappy about that, Senator Jackson.

19                  SENATOR JACKSON: Thank you. Thank  
20          you, Madam Chair.

21                   (Laughter.)

22                  CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: And we go to  
23          Assemblywoman Buttenschon.

24                  ASSEMBLYWOMAN BUTTENSCHON: Thank you,

1 Chancellor, for being here today. I  
2 appreciate your efforts, as a SUNY graduate  
3 also.

4 My colleagues have brought up many  
5 issues that are very concerning, I know, to  
6 you also, the TAP gap, EOP, and many aspects.  
7 I do just want to touch back on the adjunct  
8 ratio. You said it was 70/30 in our  
9 community colleges.

10 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Correct.

11 ASSEMBLYWOMAN BUTTENSCHON: Is that  
12 something we're looking at to change? My  
13 rationale, obviously, is many of these  
14 students, this is their first time coming  
15 into a higher educational setting, and the  
16 need for those faculty that are experienced  
17 and working full-time.

18 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So, you know,  
19 adjuncts -- there's many different ways that  
20 an adjunct works with us at SUNY. Some of  
21 the adjuncts are what you might call  
22 professors of the practice. As you said,  
23 they are full-time or they're part-time in  
24 the workforce or retired, and they have such

1 a wealth of experience we definitely -- you  
2 know, we love all our adjuncts, and those are  
3 a particular set of experiences that we  
4 relish.

5 You know, I think the opportunity to  
6 capture newly minted Ph.D.s or masters in the  
7 community college who want to make a career  
8 out of teaching with SUNY by converting those  
9 adjunct positions to full-time would be  
10 really terrific. So I think that's something  
11 that we really need to look at.

12 I think without a funding floor or a  
13 per -- and/or the increase in the individual  
14 state support for the students, it would be  
15 difficult to do that.

16 ASSEMBLYWOMAN BUTTENSCHON: I guess so  
17 the question is, are you looking to change  
18 those numbers? Or you're just going to  
19 continue to remain at 70/30 and feel, I guess  
20 as my colleague stated, satisfied or happy?

21 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Sure, yeah.  
22 Well, I'd like to increase the full-time  
23 faculty, absolutely.

24 ASSEMBLYWOMAN BUTTENSCHON: And then a

1 question regarding mental health obviously  
2 facing so many of our institutions. You have  
3 created a task force. Is this a new task  
4 force or is it a task force that's been in  
5 place? And when do you anticipate hearing  
6 recommendations from this task force?

7 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Certainly. So  
8 this is a task force that I put in place in  
9 the fall. It's had already two meetings, and  
10 I've attended one of them. It will come back  
11 with recommendations. And, you know, it's  
12 borne out by the fact that according to the  
13 one survey by Healthy Minds, about 39 percent  
14 of the students that responded are  
15 experiencing some significant mental health  
16 issue.

17 Well, that's a high percentage. I  
18 mean, you know, you have to ask, well, how  
19 many base and what was the survey response,  
20 and I get all that. But it's still a  
21 significant number. And this is, you know,  
22 part of the challenge, is that we know that  
23 our students, to be successful, need all  
24 kinds of support. They need academic

1 support, they need food security support,  
2 mental health, in some cases, support.

3 So these are things we want to be  
4 there to provide. Childcare. That's one of  
5 the reasons why we would like to see the  
6 telehealth mental counseling funding  
7 restored. So yes, it's very important to us.

8 ASSEMBLYWOMAN BUTTENSCHON: And as my  
9 colleague Fahy stated about the numbers, I  
10 would be interested in those numbers --

11 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Okay, very good.

12 ASSEMBLYWOMAN BUTTENSCHON: -- of  
13 students that are in.

14 And then just a little bit on the  
15 connection with workforce development in  
16 regards to new initiatives that you see this  
17 year, possibly at different colleges,  
18 four-year and two, that you find have helped  
19 gap that link, possibly, for the need of  
20 workforce within expanding industry.

21 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So over the last  
22 year, and one of the successes that we've  
23 had -- and again, this is really due to the  
24 work of our senior vice chancellor Johanna

1 Duncan-Poitier, working with Department of  
2 Labor Commissioner Roberta Reardon -- we've  
3 garnered about 17 million in support  
4 altogether. About half of that is from the  
5 state, and half of that is from federal and  
6 philanthropic organizations.

7           So these are programs where we're  
8 increasing the number of apprenticeships, the  
9 number of companies. We now have I think  
10 over 300 companies that we're working with in  
11 order to give that internship, that  
12 apprenticeship. Because what we've found is  
13 if a student in business, IT, or the  
14 performing arts gets an internship, their  
15 starting salary is \$26,000 more with IT, it's  
16 \$9,000 more in business, and it's \$13,000, if  
17 I are remember that right, for the performing  
18 arts. That's phenomenal. That's a very  
19 large percentage of their starting salary.

20           So it's -- part of my commitment to  
21 individualized learning and education is  
22 those applied learning experiences, which is  
23 really the hallmark of what SUNY is known  
24 for.

1 ASSEMBLYWOMAN BUTTENSCHON: Thank you.

2 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Thank you.

3 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

4 Senate?

5 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

6 Senator Gounardes.

7 SENATOR GOUNARDES: Good morning.

8 Thank you. I want to just start off by  
9 echoing some of the comments that were made  
10 earlier about, you know, the TAP gap funding  
11 and how -- you know, maybe we should look to  
12 redirect more funds to closing that gap  
13 instead of expanding Excelsior.

14 And to Senator Liu's point about, you  
15 know, the drop in public support for SUNY,  
16 you know, nationwide, since the Great  
17 Recession, funding for public education at  
18 the higher education level has dropped by  
19 \$9 billion. And we clearly have not met  
20 that -- restored funding to that level across  
21 the country, and clearly here in New York as  
22 well, and that's very, very concerning.

23 And so I think we absolutely need to  
24 be looking to see other ways to increase

1 support for both SUNY and CUNY and public  
2 funding for that. Because to keep pushing  
3 the burden onto students' shoulders is just  
4 not tenable.

5 But I do want to kind of revisit the  
6 question about mental health that has been  
7 talked about a little bit. How many --  
8 what's the ratio we have of mental health  
9 counselors to students right now across the  
10 system?

11 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: I'll have to get  
12 back to you on that. It's going to be  
13 different at different campuses. And of  
14 course it's going to vary depending on the  
15 size of the campus. So I think that we want  
16 to normalize it by the number of students.

17 I think that's one of the reasons why  
18 we were pretty excited about the -- and we  
19 are pretty excited about the telemedicine  
20 mental health program that we had in place,  
21 because we had have ten campuses involved  
22 with that. And that was being staffed by  
23 psychiatrists at Upstate Medical University.  
24 And it was very effective, but it got

1           oversubscribed pretty quickly. So we're  
2           hoping to expand that program, and that's why  
3           we're asking to restore some of the funding,  
4           or all the funding for the telecounseling  
5           program.

6                         SENATOR GOUNARDES: That's the  
7           \$500,000 that was proposed to be cut?

8                         CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: That's correct,  
9           yes.

10                        SENATOR GOUNARDES: I think nationwide  
11           the average is one counselor for every  
12           1200 students. And I think that where we are  
13           in New York, I think it's significantly  
14           higher than that. According to the numbers  
15           I've seen, it was like 2,000 in some cases,  
16           you know, systemwide. That's a very, very  
17           big discrepancy. And I think we need to do a  
18           lot more to address that. Because as you  
19           point out, there are a large number of  
20           students who need that type of support  
21           service.

22                        I want to transition a little bit. Do  
23           you have a sense of what percentage of our  
24           graduates from SUNY end up entering the

1 public service workforce or civil workforce,  
2 systemwide?

3 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: You know, I  
4 don't, off the top of my head, but I'll get  
5 you those. We have those numbers. We can  
6 get them for you.

7 SENATOR GOUNARDES: And what is SUNY  
8 doing to create pathways for its graduates  
9 into the public sector, if anything? Do we  
10 have programs that currently exist? Are we  
11 doing things to recruit students to put them  
12 onto these pathways? Can you speak to that a  
13 bit?

14 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Sure. I know  
15 that obviously the University at Albany has a  
16 pretty big pipeline through to the  
17 Legislature, and we meet a lot of alums when  
18 we go through, you know, and make our visits.  
19 So I know that that's one program for sure.

20 We do meet other students, obviously,  
21 from some of our other SUNY campuses. But  
22 let me get you an inventory and I'll come  
23 back to you on that -- both of those  
24 questions. One is the number of mental

1 health counselors per student, and also what  
2 our programs do with regard to public  
3 service. Both very important.

4 SENATOR GOUNARDES: And do you have  
5 any data as to how many students who have  
6 graduated with debt are enrolled in the  
7 public service loan forgiveness program?

8 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: No, I don't. But  
9 we'll come back to you on that.

10 SENATOR GOUNARDES: Is that data that  
11 you think that you might be able to collect  
12 in the future or, find a way to get some type  
13 of measure of that from your graduates?

14 SUNY CFO McLOUGHLIN: Let me come back  
15 to you. I think that would be a good thing  
16 to collect.

17 SENATOR GOUNARDES: Because it's very  
18 concerning, you know, with what's happening  
19 with this program -- it's obviously a federal  
20 program -- that only 3 percent of students  
21 who are enrolled and eligible have been  
22 granted forgiveness. And so if we have a  
23 large number of our own graduates who are  
24 not -- who are being screwed by the system,

1 we should know that and find ways to help  
2 address that.

3 SUNY CFO McLOUGHLIN: Absolutely.

4 Thank you. Great points.

5 SENATOR GOUNARDES: All the questions  
6 I have for you. Thank you.

7 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Assembly.

8 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We go to  
9 Assemblyman Smith.

10 ASSEMBLYMAN SMITH: Thank you.

11 And thank you, Chancellor. Our  
12 students are so lucky to have you, with your  
13 great background and your passion for this  
14 new job.

15 So the campuses must make up the TAP  
16 gap somehow. If the state were to step in  
17 and close the TAP gap, I assume that would  
18 leave more money to spend on education. What  
19 are some of the things that could be done, or  
20 what are your thoughts on that?

21 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Right. So it's a  
22 good point. So with 82 million -- and that  
23 would be distributed throughout all the  
24 campuses. So, you know, locally, I mean, you

1 know, if you divide it by 64, you'd come up  
2 with a number that -- but again, it's going  
3 to be based on the number of students.

4 So some of the things that you would  
5 use it for, if you were at a university  
6 center, those funds -- so let me just step  
7 back for a minute. Where that money comes  
8 from is from tuition and fees. Right? And  
9 some probably philanthropy. So if those  
10 dollars were relieved, right, as you said,  
11 they could go back into the academic mission.  
12 So you could do things like more full-time  
13 faculty. You could renovate classrooms and  
14 have them be more in line with sort of the  
15 high-tech classrooms that many of their peer  
16 institutions are seeing.

17 You could look at the operations that  
18 could maintain some of the new facilities  
19 that we desperately need to build for these  
20 high-demand courses. You could do curricular  
21 development. We looked at -- and I can get  
22 you these numbers. We have something like  
23 3,000 labs and classrooms throughout SUNY,  
24 and many of them need to be renovated. They

1           need to be wired, they need to be high-tech,  
2           there need to be smartboards, they need  
3           access to the internet. And we've done an  
4           estimate of what that would cost. So that's  
5           just to mention a few.

6                     ASSEMBLYMAN SMITH: Okay, great --

7                     CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Also, you know,  
8           one of the things that I'm personally  
9           invested in and personally passionate about  
10          is increasing the support at our  
11          comprehensives for their master programs; at  
12          our colleges of technologies and at our  
13          community colleges, student scholarships and  
14          fellowships.

15                    ASSEMBLYMAN SMITH: Great. Now, is  
16          SUNY going to be pushing for a representative  
17          on the Medicaid Redesign Team, or is there  
18          any push -- because as you mentioned in your  
19          written testimony, that our SUNY  
20          hospitals are safety net hospitals and they  
21          serve a very important role. So is that  
22          going to be -- are you going to be pushing  
23          for that or do we know if there's going to be  
24          an appointment representing public hospitals?

1                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: I don't know if  
2                   there is, but we'd be willing to serve. Of  
3                   course I'm recommending someone back there  
4                   (gesturing), right.

5                   ASSEMBLYMAN SMITH: I see Bob shaking  
6                   his head.

7                   Now, in terms of the \$500,000 cut to  
8                   the telecounseling, is that something that  
9                   consistently students mention that they  
10                  support? I see, you know, some head nods.  
11                  Is that something that could be made up at  
12                  all -- you know, obviously I know many of us  
13                  are going to be advocating to get that  
14                  funding back in. But any federal funds that  
15                  you think could be available to help with  
16                  that? Because I think above the 500,000 -- I  
17                  think it should be expanded, really, given  
18                  the need.

19                  CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Yeah. I think we  
20                  do need to expand it. We can look for those  
21                  kinds of programs. I'm not aware of any.  
22                  But we certainly are -- in fact, one of the  
23                  things that the SUNY system does is that we  
24                  focus on trying to garner external support,

1 both from foundations and philanthropy  
2 sources and the federal government, to  
3 leverage our scope, size, scale and breadth  
4 in order to bring those resources to the  
5 state, do pilots, expand those pilots, and  
6 then be a leader for the rest of the country.  
7 So certainly that's within what we value and  
8 what we focus on.

9 ASSEMBLYMAN SMITH: Now, with the  
10 Strategic Needs Capital Matching Program,  
11 where's that funding coming from? So would  
12 it come from a foundation -- you know, if  
13 it's not necessarily tuition or -- you know,  
14 where would a SUNY campus be expected to --

15 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So we would look  
16 at philanthropy, we would look at reserves,  
17 we would look at auxiliary services, we would  
18 look at synergies and efficiencies.

19 Let me give you an example. We have  
20 been reducing our energy use over time. In  
21 fact, one of the things that I'm very proud  
22 of, and I just want to share all this, is  
23 that in 1990 the greenhouse gas emissions  
24 from our SUNY campuses were a million metric

1           tons. Today we've reduced them to 600,000.  
2           That's a 40 percent decrease by 2020 --  
3           39 percent, I'll be precise -- ahead of the  
4           State Energy Plan, that was in 2015, which  
5           called for the 40 percent reduction by 2030.  
6           We're on track to -- we're right now probably  
7           60 percent of our electricity is from  
8           renewable sources. We've made a goal that  
9           by the end of SUNY at 75, we'll be  
10          100 percent from renewable sources.

11                        So some of those will create savings,  
12          some of those initiatives where we are  
13          conserving and not wasting. So it's an  
14          entire sustainability program that we're  
15          going after. Not printing paper, saving  
16          25 million with not printers and toners and  
17          paper. You know, that's just one aspect of  
18          the kind of savings that we're trying to  
19          provide.

20                        So, you know, there are many resources  
21          that we're going to be pulling and trying to  
22          get very conservative so we can afford the  
23          new facilities that we need.

24                        ASSEMBLYMAN SMITH: Thank you.

1 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Thank you.

2 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

3 Senator Rachel May.

4 SENATOR MAY: Thank you.

5 Good morning, Commissioner. Nice to  
6 see you again.

7 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Good morning.

8 Good to see you too.

9 SENATOR MAY: So this is -- I may  
10 sound like a broken record from last year,  
11 but because I represent four SUNY campuses  
12 and five independent colleges, I'm always  
13 concerned about policies that are pitting  
14 them against each other. Because they're all  
15 important employers in my district, they all  
16 serve students in different and unique ways.

17 And so the Excelsior expansion is one  
18 that concerns me. I know it concerns a lot  
19 of the independent colleges. And especially  
20 when the TAP gap is increasing, it just seems  
21 like maybe we're putting our resources in the  
22 wrong place.

23 So I'm wondering -- there's been an  
24 pretty steep decline in the number of

1 students taking advantage of TAP over the  
2 last six or seven years. You look surprised  
3 by that, so maybe you can't answer this --

4 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: No, I'm trying to  
5 make a note.

6 SENATOR MAY: -- question, but I'm  
7 wondering if that's just a demographic shift  
8 or if you think that that's because the money  
9 just isn't going far enough, it's not worth  
10 it to the students or if -- even if SUNY  
11 campuses might be turning students down  
12 because it costs them more to bring  
13 TAP-eligible students in.

14 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: No, I will take  
15 it on, the question, so thank you very much.

16 We have 60,000 students at our  
17 state-operated campuses that receive TAP,  
18 Tuition Assistance Program, and about 40,000  
19 are community colleges. So that's -- and  
20 then when you add on the 20,000 from  
21 Excelsior, that's about 120,000 out of our  
22 400 and some thousand. So it's a large --  
23 which is great. I mean, a majority of our  
24 students are going tuition-free.

1                   So that's extremely important to us  
2                   because, you know, just think about our  
3                   founding DNA in 1948. We were founded  
4                   because higher ed wasn't always open to  
5                   everyone who wanted to attend. And so as a  
6                   result, that's really core to our mission.  
7                   So that's why I was a little surprised. But  
8                   we'll look at the numbers.

9                   We -- our campuses don't turn away  
10                  people because they're TAP. Absolutely,  
11                  that's not -- again, that wouldn't be in our  
12                  DNA either. It does mean, though, that the  
13                  campuses do provide financial aid to those  
14                  students. And we're providing something like  
15                  \$229 million of additional support. Some of  
16                  that is the TAP, of course, which is helpful,  
17                  but some of that is the -- filling in the TAP  
18                  gap.

19                 So making college affordable is one of  
20                 my number-one priorities. Making it  
21                 excellent is the other. They're the yin and  
22                 yang. You can't really have one without the  
23                 other, or else you're paying for anything  
24                 that isn't worth anything. So that's why

1           it's critically important that we continue  
2           to -- and thank you for the support and the  
3           Governor for the support for higher ed,  
4           including our benefits and our debt service.  
5           And also any additional things that we can do  
6           will be put to great use.

7                     We love working with our private  
8           school colleagues as well. And so I think  
9           that's one of the things -- in fact, I don't  
10          know if you know this, but we have -- part of  
11          our sustainability initiative is the  
12          large-scale energy purchase, 150,000 megawatt  
13          hours. We have 20 campuses, four of which  
14          are private, our private colleagues. So  
15          there are many different ways that we work  
16          with our private colleges and they work with  
17          us, so we need to continue to do that and --

18                    SENATOR MAY: So -- so let me follow  
19          up with a question about that, because I also  
20          have two Centers of Excellence in my  
21          district, and the Centers of Excellence are  
22          facing pretty drastic cuts in this budget.  
23          SUNY ESF and Clarkson have a collaboration  
24          that they just got approval for last year,

1 but now they're -- it looks like the way the  
2 new definitions are created that that  
3 collaboration may be threatened.

4 So I'm wondering if you are -- what  
5 you think about what's going on with the  
6 Centers of Excellence.

7 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So that's --  
8 it's -- I'm glad you raised that, because  
9 it's interesting, there was a study that was  
10 done in the U.S. -- now, this is going back  
11 maybe a decade, but the important thing is  
12 that if you look at the places that are  
13 thriving, they're characterized by a great  
14 public university and a great private  
15 university.

16 Think about RTP, you've got Duke and  
17 North Carolina. Think about L.A. Think  
18 about Berkeley in the Bay Area. All those  
19 places are characterized by that partnership  
20 between a public and a private university.  
21 So I think that whatever we can do to  
22 maintain those partnerships is really, really  
23 important.

24 I think the other thing with the

1           Centers of Excellence and the Centers for  
2           Advanced Technology -- you know, there is a  
3           continuum of R&D development. There's  
4           fundamental work that needs to go on -- the  
5           kind of work that won Stanley Whittingham the  
6           Nobel Prize in Chemistry this last year, to  
7           the actual implementation which may preserve  
8           civilization as we know it in terms of  
9           bringing grid-scale storage to bear, and the  
10          continuum in between.

11                         We have to support it all, because if  
12           you just focus on the development and the  
13           implementation, then you have eaten your seed  
14           corn for the next generation of technologies  
15           that are required, whether it's in drug  
16           discovery or in IT or in energy.

17                         So I think that we, you know, need to  
18           be mindful that we need big R, little D,  
19           reasonable size R, reasonable size D, and  
20           then big D and little R. And we need it all.  
21           We can't ignore any of it. So that would be  
22           my comment.

23                         SENATOR MAY: Thank you.

24                         CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

1 Assemblyman Pichardo.

2 ASSEMBLYMAN PICHARDO: Good morning.

3 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Good morning.

4 How are you?

5 ASSEMBLYMAN PICHARDO: Hi, how's it  
6 going, Chancellor? Appreciate your time.

7 To my colleagues, to the respective  
8 chairs, thank you for convening this hearing.

9 So I want to add my voice to many of  
10 my colleagues who have mentioned the issue of  
11 the TAP gap. I'll just sort of use a  
12 football analogy -- we just had the  
13 Super Bowl this Sunday -- it's like putting  
14 up two brand-new goal posts but there's a  
15 giant crater in the middle of the field and  
16 we're asking our students to play around the  
17 crater.

18 So we need to fill that gap, we need  
19 to fill that hole, and we need to figure out  
20 a better investment than upping the ante with  
21 the Excelsior scholarship. I think we need  
22 to take care of those high-needs first and  
23 then move forward.

24 But the thrust of my question -- I

1           just want to make sure that this is  
2           mentioned, Madam Chancellor -- so there's a  
3           \$600,000 decrease in the Graduate Diversity  
4           Fellowship, there is a \$200,000 elimination  
5           of the SUNY Hispanic Leadership Institute,  
6           there's another \$200,000 elimination of the  
7           SUNY Institute for Leadership and Diversity  
8           Inclusion. And right now I know that you  
9           have made strides yourself to create a much  
10          more diverse faculty and leadership within  
11          the SUNY system. So I don't understand, if  
12          we're moving in a better direction, why does  
13          the Executive see that it's necessary to cut  
14          these programs when we need more support?

15                    CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Well, thank you  
16                    for the question.

17                    Let me pick up on the first one that  
18                    you mentioned. And that is something that,  
19                    you know, obviously I feel very passionate  
20                    about, and that is the support for our  
21                    graduate students and specifically our  
22                    Graduate Diversity Program. You know, we  
23                    would be grateful to have those resources  
24                    restored. And one of the reasons why is it's

1           the same thing as the little R -- I mean, big  
2           R to little R and little D to big D. It's --  
3           it's -- you need that whole continuum of the  
4           pipeline in education.

5                         So we're focused on PRODiG and trying  
6           to hire and diversify a thousand faculty over  
7           the next decade. But where are they going to  
8           come from? They're going to come from our  
9           graduate ranks. So I'm so proud of our  
10          comprehensive colleges, because they got  
11          together as a sector and proposed a program  
12          by which they would support -- well, working  
13          together with us, we would support postdocs  
14          and near-terminal-degree-ready graduate  
15          students of color, and women in STEM, that  
16          then could become the PRODiG faculty of  
17          tomorrow. And that's the beautiful thing  
18          about taking a 10-year view of this. Our  
19          high school students today that we're  
20          recruiting to our SUNY schools are the PRODiG  
21          faculty of 2030. So having these programs  
22          where we can support the graduate students is  
23          really, really critical.

24                         And, you know, I was a graduate

1 student. I didn't have other means of  
2 support. You know, frankly, in the Bay Area  
3 my stipend was less than the rent I had to  
4 pay. So I had -- you know, that made it  
5 difficult. I had to borrow money. It was a  
6 challenging time. So I'm, again, very  
7 sensitive. I see these students, I want to  
8 increase their money. I want to raise money,  
9 philanthropic resources.

10 One of the things that I talked about  
11 in my State of the University System and that  
12 I'm very passionate about, again, is going  
13 back to entrepreneurship: How are we going  
14 to attract those students to stay and create  
15 the companies here. A lot of times it's the  
16 postdocs and the graduate students of our  
17 faculty members that want to be close to  
18 their mentor, and they start their company  
19 close to their university.

20 And so that's the kind of opportunity,  
21 if we can give the kind of -- attract the  
22 best and the brightest graduate students  
23 here, as well as keep our rising seniors  
24 thinking about going on to graduate school,



1 with the lack of enrollment if the FTE number  
2 stays flat at this point?

3 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Right. So I'm  
4 glad you mentioned that, because there's many  
5 sides to the enrollment story.

6 One thing just to note is that we  
7 report head count. We're going to start  
8 reporting also FTE at our state-operated.  
9 Our FTE has been flat if not slightly up.  
10 It's our community colleges that in FTE are  
11 down. Also in head count, right?

12 So what we're going to do about that.  
13 First of all, we know the demographics of the  
14 State of New York has been declining in the  
15 18-to-24-year-old, but we also know that the  
16 demographics of the 24-to-44-year-old is  
17 increasing. And so that's with our real push  
18 behind SUNY Online.

19 So right now there are 40,000 students  
20 in the State of New York that are going  
21 outside the State of New York for their  
22 online education. Well, that's crazy.  
23 Especially when we have such outstanding  
24 systems like CUNY, like SUNY and our

1           privates. We've got to capture that here  
2           because we want to keep those students here,  
3           thriving, and we also want to serve them.  
4           They are ours.

5                        So we're going to put a lot of effort  
6           into online. And what we found out already,  
7           in a little pilot that we ran, is that the  
8           majority of those online students are in that  
9           demographic of the 24-to-44-year-old. So  
10          that's one of our strategies.

11                       A second strategy is to be -- really  
12          communicate more the value of a higher  
13          education degree. We know over the lifetime  
14          of someone who has a degree versus someone  
15          who doesn't, it's about a million bucks. How  
16          many people really know that? How many  
17          18-to-22-year-olds or 24-to-44-year-olds  
18          really appreciate that? So we have to do a  
19          better job.

20                       We've started a program which I give a  
21          lot of credit to our CFO, Eileen McLoughlin,  
22          who's behind me, which is financial  
23          literacy -- teaching our students how not  
24          only to manage money, but what their loans

1 mean and how that they can pay them back and  
2 manage that.

3 So a lot of this is putting in place  
4 the kind of services that will help our  
5 students be successful. And that's really  
6 what we're passionate about.

7 ASSEMBLYMAN PICHARDO: Thank you.

8 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

9 Senate.

10 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Senator Ken  
11 LaValle.

12 SENATOR LaVALLE: Chancellor, I'm  
13 going to start with an easy question. This  
14 is your what time before this committee?

15 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Third, sir.

16 SENATOR LaVALLE: Third time, good. I  
17 want to start with a SUNY hospital question.  
18 Is there any operating deficits projected for  
19 our hospitals?

20 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So our hospitals,  
21 as I put it in the written testimony, provide  
22 about 6 billion in economic activity. About  
23 2 million patient visits, 1.2 million  
24 distinct patients visit. There's Upstate,

1 Downstate, Stony Brook. The mix of Medicaid  
2 and Medicare at Upstate and Downstate is  
3 maybe -- I know Downstate is close to  
4 80 percent. Upstate is -- I can get the  
5 number for you, but it's over 50 percent.  
6 And at Stony Brook it's about 50 percent.

7 In terms of operations, I think  
8 Stony Brook is operating in the green, and we  
9 have some challenges at Downstate and Upstate  
10 that we're working on in terms of being more  
11 efficient. And a lot of that has to do with  
12 the facilities, which is why I'm so excited  
13 that the -- in the Governor's budget there's  
14 150 million for capital, 50 million for each  
15 one of our hospitals. So that was really  
16 terrific.

17 And so we're -- but we've got great  
18 leaders and we're working with the leaders  
19 and we're making great strides. These are  
20 very important to the communities they reside  
21 in, both as our safety-net hospitals but also  
22 as our engines of economic activity.

23 SENATOR LaVALLE: Have you had an  
24 opportunity to visit our hospitals?

1                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: I have, each one  
2                   of them. In fact, if I could just say one  
3                   thing, we were just at Downstate last week.  
4                   And I was -- it was amazing the care that  
5                   they give. They have about 1200 births a  
6                   year, Stony Brook has over 4,000, Upstate  
7                   about 1200 births. To see the care in the  
8                   infant NICU was amazing. These are little --  
9                   I mean, the kids would fit in your hands.  
10                  And the kind of care and dedication of that  
11                  team was phenomenal.

12                  So I can't say enough about the work  
13                  that our hospitals and faculty and staff are  
14                  doing. And, you know, it's also important  
15                  for the entire state. I know you know this,  
16                  but one out of three nurses, one out of three  
17                  docs are educated at a SUNY. And one out  
18                  of -- I think of eight licensed physicians in  
19                  the state are SUNY, and one out of five  
20                  dentists are educated in SUNY, and one out of  
21                  like seven, I think, are a licensed dentist.  
22                  Actually, no, it's more like one out of  
23                  eight. So we're really important in terms of  
24                  the healthcare for all citizens.

1           SENATOR LaVALLE: I know you've been  
2           using a lot of superlatives to describe, you  
3           know, the hospitals. And I don't think we  
4           spend enough letting the public know what we  
5           have and what we do at these great  
6           institutions. As a matter of fact, even the  
7           campuses we don't really highlight -- because  
8           word of mouth is one of the best  
9           advertisements. And so anyone who's gone to  
10          a SUNY campus is always very proud and lets  
11          the world know about their campus.

12                 I also had a question that Senator  
13          Stavisky had, dealing with our SUNY police.  
14          So I just wanted to mention that, because  
15          it's important that we continue to attract  
16          and maintain people who keep our students  
17          safe.

18                 Going on to safety. Suicides, number  
19          of suicides in 2018-2019?

20                 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: I can -- I can  
21          get you that number. I don't have that off  
22          the top of my head. Unfortunately, more than  
23          one.

24                 SENATOR LaVALLE: I'm sorry, I

1           couldn't hear that.

2                    CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: I said  
3           unfortunately, more than one. Even one would  
4           be too many.

5                    SENATOR LaVALLE: You know, I've  
6           always -- and to this day -- feel mental  
7           health services are critically important.  
8           What are we doing to maintain and expand our  
9           mental health services?

10                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: I couldn't agree  
11           more with you. And that's why this fall I  
12           established a Mental Health Wellness  
13           Task Force led by Dr. Wayne Riley at  
14           Downstate and also Dr. Deborah Stanley at  
15           SUNY Oswego. So they've been meeting often,  
16           and I'll have a set of recommendations in the  
17           spring. That's the first thing.

18                    The second thing is that we set up the  
19           telecounseling mental health network with 10  
20           campuses involved. That was very well  
21           received and supported by students, so we're  
22           hoping that the funding will be restored with  
23           that.

24                    I will get back to the Senator about

1 the number of mental healthcare professionals  
2 that we have on campus per student, so we'll  
3 come back to you with that.

4 SENATOR LaVALLE: Thank you.

5 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: And that will  
6 inform what are the resources that we truly  
7 need to meet the needs.

8 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

9 Assembly.

10 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Some time ago  
11 we were joined by Assemblywoman Griffin, and  
12 we go to Assemblywoman Bichotte for some  
13 questions.

14 ASSEMBLYWOMAN BICHOTTE: Hello,  
15 Chancellor. Thank you for being here.

16 As you know, I'm a proud alum of  
17 Buffalo State College and SUNY Buffalo.

18 I had a few questions. First I want  
19 to say that I'm really happy to see that some  
20 of the programs have been maintained, like  
21 CSTEP, HEOP, SEEK. These are programs that  
22 we've been fighting every year that's been  
23 threatened to be decreased, so I'm happy that  
24 they are maintaining their budget.

1 I do have some concerns with the  
2 childcare centers being cut significantly,  
3 813,000. Certainly we'd like to know the  
4 driving force of that.

5 I do have some questions around TAP.  
6 You know, was TAP really having an enrollment  
7 problem? It seems as if TAP is being  
8 decreased by over 10 percent. And there has  
9 been -- has there been a corresponding fall  
10 in the numbers of low-income students to  
11 warrant this? If anything, we should be  
12 increasing the services for the number of  
13 low-income students and their opportunities.

14 Can you give specifics on TAP  
15 enrollments? Is TAP making itself aware to  
16 the population it's supposed to be working  
17 with? And all of this cut, again, is  
18 addressing -- widening the TAP gap. I  
19 thought there was a commitment to narrow the  
20 gap.

21 In addition to that, what percentage  
22 of the TAP funds that are falling are going  
23 to Dreamers? And I'll stop here.

24 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Okay. Well,

1           thank you very much, and it's good to see you  
2           again as well.

3                     I'll have to get back to you on some  
4           of the specifics on TAP. What I can tell you  
5           is that I know we have 100,000 students that  
6           are getting TAP. The majority of those are  
7           full-time. They're split about 60-40 between  
8           state-operated and community college. I  
9           don't have the year-on-year number, so I will  
10          get back to you on that.

11                    We do have a TAP gap of about  
12          82 million. And as tuition went up this  
13          year, that widened the gap. I think last  
14          year it was 60-some million, but the increase  
15          in tuition created another gap.

16                    So we would like to, you know, start  
17          to narrow that gap. So that would be  
18          certainly something we would be supportive  
19          of.

20                    The other questions I'm --

21                    ASSEMBLYWOMAN BICHOTTE: So is the  
22          percentage of the TAP funds, the fall, are  
23          they going to Dreamers?

24                    CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Oh. So I don't

1           have numbers on the Dreamers. We don't keep  
2           that data. So maybe I can find out if it's  
3           available, but we tend not to track DACA  
4           students.

5                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN BICHOTTE: With the  
6           enrollment increasing, why is the total of  
7           176 FTEs staying the same? Why is that  
8           consistent and not increasing as well?

9                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Right. So our  
10          enrollment in the state ops has been pretty  
11          flat on an FTE basis. I mean, it's slightly,  
12          slightly, slightly up. It's really, at the  
13          community colleges, been in decline, both in  
14          head count and FTE. So that may be one of  
15          the reasons there's a change in the TAP  
16          students. I'll have to look at it, and I'll  
17          definitely get back to you.

18                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN BICHOTTE: Okay. I know  
19          you were very highly impressed with the  
20          progress made in diversity leadership and the  
21          target of increasing diversity in our faculty  
22          and adjunct professors on the campus.

23                   However, you know, I did have some  
24          concerns with all of these programs being

1 cut, these diversity programs being cut.  
2 And, you know, let's be honest, it's really a  
3 small, tiny amount, so why are we targeting  
4 these diversity programs that are servicing  
5 our students?

6 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Yeah. I think  
7 what I was really thrilled to see in the  
8 Governor's budget was the support for EOP and  
9 EOC and Attain. So I thought that was just  
10 really excellent. And then the decrease in  
11 the Graduate Diversity Fellowship is on a  
12 base of, you know, 6.6 million, so it was a  
13 decrease of 600,000. And we would like to  
14 ask to restore that, because I think it's  
15 important, again, for that education  
16 pipeline, to make sure that all along the way  
17 that we increase our diversity.

18 ASSEMBLYWOMAN BICHOTTE: Okay.  
19 Speaking of diversity, I also saw that about  
20 \$1.4 billion is being allocated to SUNY  
21 capital programs. What's the percentage of  
22 these capital programs going to be  
23 MWBE-certified or be dedicated to MWBE  
24 vendors?

1                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Right. So MWBE,  
2 we actually exceed the Governor's goal of  
3 30 percent. So we will continue to keep our  
4 record, you know, really strong in that  
5 regard. I think last year -- I'll get you  
6 the exact numbers, but it was over 30 percent  
7 went to MWBE contractors.

8                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN BICHOTTE: Over  
9 30 percent?

10                  CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Yeah. Yes.

11                  CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.  
12 Senate?

13                  CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

14                  I think I'm the closer, and then it  
15 will be Toby Stavisky, second round.

16                  So we talked about the fact that the  
17 number of students getting TAP is actually  
18 going down in SUNY. We talked about the fact  
19 that you, like many of us, are a big fan of  
20 HEOP, EOP, other programs that are serving  
21 exceptionally low income students with family  
22 incomes of 15,000 to 21,000 and how valuable  
23 a college degree is for exactly this  
24 population.

1                   So you have fewer poor students coming  
2                   to you. Is it because they're not  
3                   college-ready when they're getting out of our  
4                   high schools, hence can never even get into  
5                   the SUNY system?

6                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So if I  
7                   understand the question, are there students  
8                   that are not graduating from our high schools  
9                   college-ready? Is that the question?

10                  CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Yeah.

11                  CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Certainly what we  
12                  see is there are a number of students that  
13                  need additional support to be college-ready.

14                  The good news -- and again, this is  
15                  something that we've discovered in our pilots  
16                  and are very pleased with -- is that if you  
17                  set an expectation for success, students will  
18                  meet it. You have to provide the resources  
19                  and the support, and we do do that through  
20                  the corequisite English and math programs  
21                  that are being pioneered not just at our  
22                  community colleges -- although the majority  
23                  at our community colleges -- but also at our  
24                  colleges of technologies as well as our

1           comprehensives and university centers.

2                        So I think that we have, through -- we  
3           have an umbrella program for student success  
4           called SUNY Achieve, and that includes things  
5           like corequisite math and English. So it's  
6           not remediation, but it's augmentation. This  
7           works, and we're going to continue to really  
8           focus on it.

9                        CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: So to follow  
10          up -- actually, it was on Senator Jackson's  
11          concern that because we fail to provide  
12          adequate Foundation Aid funding for K-12, our  
13          students aren't college-ready when they leave  
14          school. Do you actually know whether you're  
15          seeing fewer poor students applying, or  
16          you're just not letting them in?

17                        CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Oh, our  
18          admission -- well, as you probably know, our  
19          community colleges are open enrollment, so  
20          all students are going to be admitted. There  
21          are admission criteria for the colleges of  
22          technology and the comprehensives, but I'll  
23          have to get back to you on just where those  
24          admissions are.

1 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Mm-hmm. Okay.

2 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: But we have a mix  
3 of -- and I think that's the strength of  
4 SUNY, is that we have a mix of -- I mean, if  
5 you look at the head of the EOC program in  
6 Rochester, Roosevelt started as getting his  
7 GED at the EOC. And then he got his  
8 associate's and then he got his four-year and  
9 then he got his E.D. Then he came back and  
10 he's now the dean running that program.

11 You can start at SUNY and we will meet  
12 you where you are and bring you along.

13 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: So looking at the  
14 other side of the equation -- and we've had a  
15 number of questions there around the  
16 Governor's proposed expansion of the  
17 Excelsior credit scholarship, so going from  
18 125,000 to 150,000 in family income.

19 Do you know currently what percentage  
20 of your students fall into the 125 to 150? I  
21 don't expect you to know it off the top of  
22 your head, so probably get back to us.

23 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: We'll get back to  
24 you.

1                   CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: So the questions  
2                   are what percentage of your students now are  
3                   in the 125 to 150 population? What  
4                   percentage of them appear to have trouble  
5                   finishing school within four years? And  
6                   what's the average student debt they're  
7                   carrying when they end SUNY?

8                   Because I do think there's been quite  
9                   a bit of questions about how does the state  
10                  prioritize those in greatest need. And of  
11                  course it's both looking at can they get into  
12                  our schools, can they complete the work of  
13                  our schools, and what kind of debt they might  
14                  be carrying.

15                  And we know the numbers for -- and the  
16                  issues for lowest-income, but these would, I  
17                  assume, fall into some of the higher-income  
18                  families that are throughout the SUNY system.

19                  CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: We'll get back to  
20                  you on that. Thank you.

21                  CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: I appreciate  
22                  that.

23                  And then also I know you partly  
24                  answered this question, but I'm not sure it

1           was asked directly. Do you agree with the  
2           independent colleges that this program  
3           specifically will lead to some of the smaller  
4           independent liberal arts colleges closing in  
5           this state?

6                    CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: I haven't really  
7           focused on that, just because I'm -- you  
8           know, let's just say I have all I can say  
9           grace over at the public sphere. And I don't  
10          mean to be flip about that at all, but I  
11          really haven't looked at it and I haven't  
12          seen the data. But again, we're happy to  
13          have a conversation. Let's -- we can put the  
14          data out and just see what really is going  
15          on.

16                   CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Okay. Thank you.  
17           Assembly.

18                   CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We go to  
19          Assemblyman Stirpe.

20                   ASSEMBLYMAN STIRPE: Good morning.

21                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Good morning.

22                   ASSEMBLYMAN STIRPE: Thanks for being  
23          here and addressing all our questions.

24                   I have a question from one of my

1 colleagues that I'm supposed to carry to you,  
2 and it involves the new STEAM regional high  
3 school that was approved in Syracuse. And  
4 it's sort of been changed a little bit; now  
5 it also includes workforce development. And  
6 she wants to know how that will affect the  
7 Syracuse EOC, which is one block away from  
8 that potential new school.

9 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Right. So I  
10 think that there's a natural synergy between  
11 the EOC -- again, if we look at that  
12 pipeline, high school students could go to  
13 the EOC, could get particular training around  
14 workforce development. Right now they're  
15 not -- they're near each other, but they're  
16 not collocated, so it would be interesting to  
17 see how this evolves. And we'll do whatever  
18 we can in support from SUNY to make it  
19 successful.

20 I think that that's -- I had a chance  
21 in the fall to go up to the central region  
22 and sit down and spend time with five of our  
23 SUNY presidents as well as the head of  
24 economic development in that area, and

1 learned that there are something like  
2 5,000 unfilled skilled jobs.

3 So, you know, I think the exciting  
4 thing about what SUNY can do is that you  
5 could actually, using machine learning, sit  
6 down and say okay, what's the criteria that  
7 these jobs are needed, what are the skill  
8 sets, what's the skill set of the resumes of  
9 the individuals who aspire and want to be in  
10 that industry, and then figure out for each  
11 particular job what's the skills that are  
12 needed and point that individual to a SUNY  
13 class, a microcredential, vocational  
14 training, EOC or some other program that we  
15 can develop and provide. That's what  
16 individualized learning is about. That's  
17 where we need to focus going forward.

18 So I'm excited about that, and  
19 working -- we will work and do whatever we  
20 can, as SUNY, to support those efforts.

21 ASSEMBLYMAN STIRPE: Okay. In the  
22 beginning of your tenure you came around and  
23 visited all the regions and talked about some  
24 of your goals. And one of the big ones was

1 around research dollars, and especially AI.  
2 And can you talk about what's happened in the  
3 last few years and where some of this  
4 research might be going on right now?

5 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Sure.  
6 Absolutely. We have seen an increase year  
7 over year in our research expenditures by  
8 \$136 million. And a lot of that is focusing  
9 on -- and this is really the great work of  
10 Senior Vice Chancellor Grace Wang, who's  
11 sitting behind me, and her team and the  
12 RF Foundation and our colleagues.

13 So it's really being cognizant about  
14 where is the future of the future of work?  
15 What's the kind of research and development  
16 that our students need to go through in terms  
17 of training to be ready to go into those  
18 industries? Then what are the -- you know,  
19 if you look at where research is going --  
20 when I started out a long time ago, it was  
21 one professor and a few students working in a  
22 lab on your own. Then we evolved into groups  
23 where you get -- you know, maybe if you're a  
24 chemist you invite a physicist over for

1 coffee and maybe work together. Then we had  
2 these larger interdisciplinary programs, and  
3 I ran one in Colorado which was in optical  
4 AI. So it was chemists and physicists and  
5 engineers, psychologists, cognitive  
6 neuroscientists working together to figure  
7 out how could we built smarter, faster,  
8 better computers that emulate the  
9 organizational properties of the human brain.  
10 Right? Well, that's really kind of what AI  
11 is today.

12 The problem was when we were doing  
13 that 30 years ago, we didn't have the sensors  
14 and the computational power because Moore's  
15 Law hadn't continued on for 30 years to where  
16 we are today, which is sort of done. But  
17 wow, you know, a thousand times -- on every  
18 single dimension -- better. Now we have the  
19 capability to actually design the kind of  
20 programs I talked about to do that career  
21 matching with the vocation and the avocation  
22 of every student.

23 And I have to say just one little  
24 quote by Mark Twain {sic} which I think

1 brings it all together, "Two Tramps in Mud  
2 Time": When you can bring an avocation and a  
3 vocation together like two eyes in sight,  
4 that's what our goal is. And we have now the  
5 capability and the desire to do that.

6 So we started a new center in AI at  
7 Stony Brook, we have a center in AI up in  
8 Buffalo. Grace Wang, Dr. Wang, is  
9 coordinating all the AI activities across all  
10 of SUNY. And the way that we're increasing  
11 our research expenditures is to be able to  
12 develop group multidisciplinary and now  
13 convergent research where you're really like  
14 a partner in the labs. You get rid of the  
15 ego, and you work together for the greater  
16 purpose. That's why we're being successful,  
17 in my opinion. We'll do 1.7 billion in  
18 research expenditures this year. I want to  
19 get to 2 billion.

20 ASSEMBLYMAN STIRPE: Great, thank you.

21 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

22 Senate?

23 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

24 Toby Stavisky to close for the Senate.

1                   SENATOR STAVISKY: Real quick, let me  
2 just follow up with some of the questions.  
3 The Higher Ed Committee in the Senate held  
4 hearings throughout the state, there were six  
5 of them, in the fall. And the students, I  
6 must tell you, I think were the stars. And  
7 many of them talked about the mental health  
8 issues that were discussed here today. And  
9 in fact, as you know, the recommended ratio  
10 is about one counselor for every thousand  
11 students.

12                   You said you didn't -- weren't sure of  
13 the ratio, but let me ask you if you have any  
14 idea of the waiting time. The students spoke  
15 about long waits for counseling.

16                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: It's too long.  
17 It's too long.

18                   SENATOR STAVISKY: One other --

19                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: But I'll quantify  
20 that. But I know from talking with some of  
21 the students it's too long.

22                   SENATOR STAVISKY: And I know you have  
23 your task force with two of your experts, and  
24 we await what they say.

1                   One other quick question. What has  
2                   been the enrollment projection -- what are  
3                   the enrollment projections for the future for  
4                   the four-year -- I know a lot depends on the  
5                   economy, obviously -- but the four-year and  
6                   the community colleges?

7                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So our four-year  
8                   colleges are pretty steady. And where we're  
9                   seeing the decrease is in the community  
10                  colleges, in part because our economy has  
11                  been growing, on average, 2 percent a year.  
12                  We have a very low unemployment rate.

13                  So what we are putting in place, three  
14                  or four -- actually, six different  
15                  strategies. And this is the great work by  
16                  our still fairly new provost, Dr. Tod  
17                  Lauersen.

18                  SENATOR STAVISKY: He is, I must tell  
19                  you, very responsive in many ways.

20                  CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Terrific.

21                  SENATOR STAVISKY: It's appreciated.

22                  CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So we are looking  
23                  at many different strategies. One is the  
24                  individualized learning. So it's the

1 Re-enroll to Complete, it's the corequisite  
2 English and math, it's reducing the cost of  
3 our textbooks, it's bringing financial  
4 literacy to our students.

5 Then there's the research and  
6 innovation and the apprenticeships and  
7 internships. I think when you create the  
8 opportunity for our students to learn, how to  
9 apply what they're learning in the classroom  
10 in a real world environment, they get turned  
11 on, they get super excited. And then that  
12 also helps with completion.

13 And then the emphasis on  
14 entrepreneurship, sustainability,  
15 partnerships. I mean, this is all part of  
16 the ecosystem that we're trying to put  
17 together to, you know, create that student  
18 success program.

19 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you. And  
20 your stability programs have really -- I hope  
21 are going to be very successful. Thank you.

22 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Thank you.

23 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

24 Assembly.



1 especially that we're expanding it at this  
2 point.

3 My other question is I understand that  
4 community colleges are experiencing a massive  
5 reduction in enrollment directly related to  
6 these Excelsior scholarships. And as a  
7 result, you know, they are experiencing  
8 various decreases in their funding.

9 So what is being done to address this  
10 impact, and how is this underusage impacting  
11 taxpayers?

12 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So I mentioned  
13 earlier in the testimony, we have about  
14 24,000 students between SUNY and CUNY that  
15 are attending on Excelsior. It's not clear  
16 that there's massive decreases in the  
17 community college due to Excelsior, so I  
18 think that we really need to look at the data  
19 there to see.

20 When you consider that we have about  
21 200,000 students attending community college,  
22 I'm not sure that the decreases that we're  
23 seeing would be attributed to that. I think  
24 more what I would say in our community

1 colleges, if you plot the decrease in  
2 population over the last year, the slope went  
3 a little sharper. We're running into a time  
4 when the population is experiencing an even  
5 bigger decline, and that's borne out by I  
6 think in the last maybe four years, we've had  
7 a net loss of about a million -- maybe it's a  
8 little longer period of time, but just  
9 particularly decreasing right now.

10 So what we're doing is we're putting  
11 in place a number of different programs in  
12 order to recapture those students. Like the  
13 one I mentioned, Re-enroll to Complete, which  
14 returned 8,000 students who had dropped out.  
15 And we got them back before their federal  
16 loans came due so that they now can complete  
17 their degree and then garner the type of  
18 salary that will help them repay.

19 So we're putting together a -- you  
20 know, I would say a multiprong -- we have put  
21 together a multiprong strategic approach to  
22 the enrollment which I think will really help  
23 our community colleges.

24 So, you know, when we think about the

1 success of Excelsior -- and we'll get the  
2 breakout -- if you think about the majority  
3 of the students going to community colleges  
4 that are on Excelsior are retained at  
5 20 percent higher than non-Excelsior, it's  
6 working.

7 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GRIFFIN: Right.

8 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Now, I'm not  
9 saying that anything is perfect. But I  
10 think, you know, it would be good to get the  
11 data and to see, you know, are there  
12 particular places where it could work better.  
13 So we'll do that.

14 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GRIFFIN: Yeah, I know I  
15 represent -- a lot of my constituents go to  
16 Nassau Community College, which is a very  
17 large community college. But they are  
18 struggling with their finances as a result.

19 And quickly, I just wanted to echo the  
20 comments on the TAP gap. Of course, you  
21 know, I'd really love to be able to resolve  
22 that because I think our independent and  
23 private colleges are very important to every  
24 community in New York State. I happen to

1           have Molloy College in my community, and I  
2           know a lot of constituents use that  
3           university.

4                     Mental health, I echo the support for  
5           much more to be done for mental health for  
6           students.

7                     And then also the university police  
8           officers. I know there's a little bit of a  
9           challenge with the attrition rate with the  
10          university police officers, and I wondered  
11          have you met with the New York State PBA to  
12          see what can be done about that attrition  
13          rate?

14                    CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Well, they  
15          haven't contacted me, but I would be  
16          delighted to meet and to talk about it. But  
17          I wasn't aware of any large attrition rate,  
18          so.

19                    ASSEMBLYWOMAN GRIFFIN: Oh, okay.  
20          Yeah, they are -- they report to me that it  
21          was a 30 percent attrition rate, so they  
22          are -- that's a concern to them, yeah.

23                    CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Is that from one  
24          particular campus or overall? That seems

1 high.

2 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GRIFFIN: I believe  
3 that's from all.

4 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Thirty percent.  
5 Hmm. Okay. Well, we'll look at it.

6 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GRIFFIN: Okay, thank  
7 you so much.

8 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: By the way,  
9 Nassau Community College, you have a great  
10 new president there, so we're really excited  
11 about {inaudible} Dr. Williams --

12 (Overtalk.)

13 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GRIFFIN: Yeah, really  
14 great, it seems like he'll be a fantastic  
15 proposition. Thank you so much.

16 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: You bet.

17 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

18 Since the Senate doesn't have any more  
19 questioners, we go to Alicia Hyndman.

20 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Thank you,  
21 Chair Weinstein.

22 Thank you, Chancellor, and thank you  
23 to your team. I know you don't do this  
24 alone.

1                   So I am in agreement with my  
2                   colleagues; I fully support TAP gap. And I  
3                   have my comments on Excelsior, which most of  
4                   my colleagues said.

5                   I wanted to talk about OER, because  
6                   you mentioned it in your report. You said  
7                   over 59 campuses are utilizing it and it's  
8                   been a savings of about -- or reduced  
9                   textbook costs of 47 million. Do you have a  
10                  breakdown per campus?

11                  CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: We can get that  
12                  for you.

13                  ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Okay. So from  
14                  the research that we've found, a lot of  
15                  required textbooks that are in or available  
16                  in OER are from professors that are teaching  
17                  in SUNY. Are you aware of that? And a lot  
18                  of the books that they're also using are also  
19                  recommended by some of their colleagues.

20                  CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So I can  
21                  certainly look at that. It's not unusual to  
22                  have a professor write a textbook, especially  
23                  when they're a leader in their particular  
24                  field, and then have the students use it.

1 But --

2 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: I know.

3 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Yeah. But I'll  
4 look into it.

5 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Is there a way  
6 you can ensure that more resources or more  
7 textbooks that are not by college  
8 professors are available in OER?

9 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So generally the  
10 textbooks that are written for college are  
11 written by college professors. But there are  
12 other materials that are available that --  
13 that's I think one of the things we're trying  
14 to put in place with OER that has saved our  
15 students 47 million bucks over three years,  
16 is equivalent materials, maybe materials that  
17 are prepared -- you know, as a former  
18 professor myself, I know that I did often  
19 prepare my own materials and then provide  
20 them to the class, and that's what we see our  
21 professors doing as well.

22 There are some times when a particular  
23 textbook is sort of, you know, the standard  
24 of that particular course. Sometimes it's

1 developed by someone at the particular  
2 college, sometimes it's at another  
3 university. So our goal is to keep cost of  
4 textbooks low independent of, you know, who  
5 wrote or provided them for our students. And  
6 I think that we're making a lot of great  
7 headway there, so we'll continue to be  
8 vigilant.

9 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: I'm glad  
10 New York State is using it, because as a  
11 parent of a child who's in college, once  
12 everything's paid, the tuition and the  
13 housing, then comes the textbooks. And I'm  
14 always looking for -- she's always looking  
15 for ways to cut down costs.

16 With telehealth, is that occurring  
17 now, or is that something that you're looking  
18 at doing?

19 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: It is occurring  
20 now, and it started a couple of years ago.  
21 We are, I believe, in our second year, and  
22 we've expanded it to 10 campuses. And it's  
23 being run by psychiatrists from our Upstate  
24 Medical University, where students at these

1           10 campuses can call and make an appointment  
2           and then get help.

3                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: How do you  
4           know if that's successful? And how many  
5           campuses does SUNY have, and you're only  
6           using it at 10 right now?

7                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So there's 10,  
8           and we're hoping, with -- you know, to  
9           restore the funding so that we can look at  
10          expanding. So we would love to expand that  
11          opportunity for all of our students.

12                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Okay. Thank  
13          you.

14                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Thank you.

15                   CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: So we go now to  
16          Assemblywoman Simon.

17                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Am I on? This  
18          little red light doesn't really light up very  
19          well.

20                   Thank you, Chair Weinstein and  
21          Senator Krueger and Chancellor.

22                   I have a couple of questions. You  
23          know, I want to sort of just add my voice to  
24          the concerns about the TAP gap. It is a

1 persistent problem that's only getting worse.  
2 And we have to find some way of addressing  
3 this issue, and we need somebody -- we need  
4 to put our heads together and figure this  
5 out.

6 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Right. Right.

7 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: I'm also  
8 concerned about the kind of separation  
9 that -- we address this issue of the  
10 Excelsior Scholarship Program, but we're not  
11 addressing the other issues that students  
12 face. So, for example, the problem with  
13 books, transportation, food insecurity. It's  
14 nice that we have food pantries on campus,  
15 but we really shouldn't have to have food  
16 pantries on campus. We shouldn't be putting  
17 our students in a position where they are  
18 food-insecure because their tuition is going  
19 up.

20 And I think that it's an issue that I  
21 think is a big problem in higher education,  
22 it's a big problem in New York State. And it  
23 seems to me that the way we are addressing  
24 the increase in tuition and not addressing

1           these other issues that go hand in hand with  
2           trying to make our schools more accessible to  
3           people who need that education so we can move  
4           them forward -- we're kind of just dancing  
5           around this.

6                       And so I'm curious what, if anything,  
7           SUNY is doing to look differently at this  
8           situation and come up with a way that perhaps  
9           through varied policies we can start tackling  
10          this issue on the ground in the way that  
11          students are experiencing it.

12                      CHANCELLOR JOHNSON:  Yup.  Well,  
13          absolutely.  And we look forward to working  
14          with you during the next few months in the  
15          legislative session to see about coming up  
16          with ways to address this.

17                      I think one of the things that we're  
18          doing internally is looking at efficiencies  
19          of scale.  I know I already said it once,  
20          maybe I said it twice, but there are ways  
21          that we believe, through the print initiative  
22          that our CFO is leading, that we can take  
23          some costs out of SUNY which then will allow  
24          us to put the resources into the academic end

1 and the other resources that we need for our  
2 students.

3 And that's not an insignificant amount  
4 of money we think we can recapture for the  
5 campuses. So I think it's, you know, looking  
6 at making sure that we don't waste anything,  
7 whether it's food, whether it's water,  
8 whether it's energy, whether it's our other  
9 resources, so that we're great stewards of  
10 the taxpayer dollars.

11 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Another question  
12 I have is about students with disabilities.  
13 There has not been an increase in the  
14 per-capita rate that is paid or allocated for  
15 students in about 30 years. And clearly the  
16 cost of serving students with disabilities is  
17 greater.

18 And we are happy that we have more and  
19 more students with disabilities taking part  
20 in the education in New York State, but we  
21 are really undercutting the ability of our  
22 SUNY campuses to provide for their needs so  
23 that they can graduate and -- because we're  
24 just not funding that. And so everything is

1 on a shoestring. And I'm curious what your  
2 office is doing to help think through a way  
3 that we can address that issue.

4 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So we do know  
5 that we have at least 32,000 students,  
6 probably around 32,000 students with  
7 disabilities, of which about 22,000 of those  
8 are neurodevelopmental, so whether it's ADHD,  
9 autism and other issues.

10 So we are working with those students  
11 day in and day out to have them become  
12 successful. We have resources on our  
13 campuses to provide support. In fact, I  
14 think we -- we can get you some numbers  
15 because recently we looked at what are we  
16 spending on and allocating to help all of our  
17 students be successful, particularly students  
18 with disabilities. So I'll get back to you  
19 on that.

20 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Okay. Because  
21 it may be staffing issues as well, there's  
22 not enough staff to go around.

23 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Yup, it could be.

24 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: That's a big

1 issue on these campuses, as well as  
2 technological advances.

3 And then one other issue I'd like to  
4 address is our schools of education, and SUNY  
5 has a number of schools of education. And  
6 the issues that have been raised with  
7 students who need remedial work and the  
8 education that we're giving our kids from  
9 K-12.

10 (Protestors chanting in background.)

11 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Okay. And the  
12 issues about adequate teacher preparation,  
13 that our schools are not teaching our  
14 teachers how to teach reading and if  
15 scientific ways that we know are the -- that  
16 we know are validated. And it seems to me  
17 that this all feeds into this problem.

18 And I would like to talk about what it  
19 is the SUNY schools are doing in their  
20 colleges of education to change that picture.

21 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Okay. And I'll  
22 come back to you. I know we have 16 or 17  
23 colleges of education. So we can certainly  
24 get you the information.

1 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Okay, thank you.

2 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Thank you.

3 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Appreciate it.

4 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

5 We go to Assemblyman Ra.

6 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: Good morning,

7 Chancellor.

8 So I just wanted to go back to  
9 Excelsior and TAP. How many students have  
10 applied to Excelsior last year and how many  
11 are receiving awards under Excelsior?

12 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: I think the  
13 number in SUNY is 20,000 are receiving  
14 awards. I'm not sure how many applied, but I  
15 could ask -- {inaudible exchange}.

16 We'll get back to you on that. I know  
17 for sure, though, at least 20,000 are at  
18 SUNY. Which is a 20 percent raise over the  
19 year before.

20 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: Okay. So really my  
21 question, then, is when we look at -- I mean,  
22 any student that we can help go to school and  
23 alleviate, you know, the debt issue and all  
24 of that is a good thing. But when we look at

1 the students impacted by the program, by  
2 Excelsior, versus TAP, which we haven't, you  
3 know, modernized in years in terms of income  
4 levels and everything, I guess my question is  
5 if we -- you know, in an ideal world we would  
6 fund all of these things. But if we are  
7 going to put, you know, a set of resources of  
8 whatever it is, doesn't it make more sense to  
9 put it towards TAP, which gives those  
10 students, you know, the opportunity to go to  
11 school, pick where they want to go? And it  
12 seemingly, to me, impacts a lot more  
13 students.

14 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So we'll come  
15 back to you on the numbers and just look at,  
16 you know, how many students would be impacted  
17 potentially with this change. We'll  
18 definitely get back to you. I don't know  
19 those numbers right now.

20 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: Okay.

21 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: What I will  
22 say -- and again, I know you all know this --  
23 our ability for offering students TAP support  
24 coming from families with incomes of less

1           than 80,000, Excelsior -- and I know you know  
2           this -- was provided to hit the next tranche.  
3           You know, the 80 to the 125. And now the  
4           Governor is looking at the 125 to 150. So  
5           that is a different segment of the population  
6           for sure.

7                         I think that with the campuses  
8           providing the TAP gap, any relief on that  
9           would be very much appreciated and would help  
10          the campuses tremendously. So we'll look  
11          forward to working with you to see what we  
12          can come up with. I think I've heard pretty  
13          clearly that's something that would be a good  
14          thing for all of us to think about.

15                        ASSEMBLYMAN RA: And then just as --  
16          and, you know, I don't necessarily expect you  
17          to have this information right now, but with  
18          following up on the number of applications.  
19          If you can provide any information regarding,  
20          you know, students that are applying or maybe  
21          losing it because they have to drop a class  
22          or -- you know, because we know that the  
23          stringent requirements of Excelsior have, you  
24          know, caused some issues with students. I've

1 had constituents who I've worked with to try  
2 to get hardships and stuff, who have had  
3 illnesses that have come up, you know, family  
4 situations that are have come up.

5 And I think that, you know, that has  
6 been a source of frustration for many who  
7 otherwise would qualify and get an award that  
8 obviously would be a financial benefit to  
9 them and their families but have, for  
10 whatever reason, not been able to meet that  
11 requirement. I know we have a little more  
12 flexibility than we perhaps had initially  
13 with this, but I think that's something we  
14 need to look at as we're looking at  
15 expansions, is making sure that this is  
16 available to as many students as possible  
17 who, you know, may have something come up,  
18 through no fault of their own, that makes  
19 them not eligible for those very stringent  
20 requirements.

21 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Agreed. Thank  
22 you.

23 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

24 We go to our final questioner,

1 Assemblywoman Glick, for a second round.

2 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Thank you very  
3 much.

4 Not to belabor it, but just to make  
5 clear, Excelsior is the last dollar. So  
6 students who have TAP, Pell, can apply if  
7 they can meet those 30 credits a year, and it  
8 makes up for the difference. That delta, you  
9 know, eats up their Pell so they don't have  
10 money for books, transportation and the like.

11 So it is clearly intended, as you say,  
12 to hit the higher income bracket, and those  
13 are kids who perhaps have sufficient support  
14 to ensure that they have family support that  
15 makes it easier for them. They may not have  
16 to have a job in order to go to school.  
17 That's not your -- I know they need to reset  
18 the timer -- that -- so I'll just continue.

19 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Yeah, go ahead.

20 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: On the STEM  
21 scholarship, we had a bill that got vetoed,  
22 because we wanted to make a change. If you  
23 have a STEM scholarship, it's like Excelsior,  
24 but you have to graduate in the top

1           10 percent of your class. You don't have  
2           that requirement from Excelsior.

3                     If you are in that top 10 percent,  
4           you're pursuing STEM, we tried and had vetoed  
5           the work requirement for the years after in  
6           that specific field, because we had students  
7           from largely upstate who said they wanted to  
8           go home, but they couldn't get a job in that  
9           specific field. So it converts to a loan.

10                    So what happens is now you're coming  
11           from a family that maybe makes \$50,000, you  
12           worked hard, you got your scholarship, and  
13           now you find out that you can't get a job in  
14           Malone, so it turns into a loan. And now you  
15           have a loan, you don't have the job prospects  
16           in your area where you wanted to live, so now  
17           you move to Boston, where you can perhaps get  
18           a job in the field that you studied.

19                    So you're talking about the advisement  
20           that helps students make good choices. And  
21           it seems to me clearly there have been some  
22           students who have made -- you know, they  
23           believed our rhetoric that these are the jobs  
24           of the future, but the future hasn't arrived

1 in a lot of places. And so now we have lost  
2 a kid who graduated in the top 10 percent,  
3 focused on STEM. And somehow we've got other  
4 kids who come from families with higher  
5 incomes who don't have the same work  
6 requirement, and they go home and do flower  
7 arrangements with mom and they stay in the  
8 state, but they're not necessarily the kids  
9 that we were hoping to support.

10 So what is SUNY going to do to make  
11 certain that we don't have any more kids  
12 talking to their representative, who then  
13 talks to me about this problem in terms of  
14 matching students with what is actually  
15 available should they actually want to return  
16 home?

17 CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: So I think that  
18 one of the things that I'm very, very focused  
19 on is increasing the number of  
20 internships and apprenticeships for our  
21 students so that they don't have to make  
22 those choices that you're talking about. And  
23 one of the things is -- you know, I always  
24 think about Excelsior is one of the tools in

1 the toolbox. TAP's another one. Pell  
2 grants. All -- we need to increase the  
3 number of fellowships and scholarships to  
4 give a broader set of choices and  
5 opportunities for our students, without a  
6 doubt.

7 The second thing is I think we are  
8 making inroads on using the strength and the  
9 quality of our SUNY schools to attract  
10 industries that then provide those  
11 internships. To give an example, Cree. Cree  
12 is going to invest a billion dollars --  
13 Empire State Development and the state is  
14 going to invest funding as well to attract  
15 them -- to put a major silicon carbide fab  
16 next to SUNY Poly in Utica that will create  
17 600-some careers -- not just jobs, but  
18 careers, a lot of overnight jobs. But  
19 they're already hiring our students for those  
20 summer internship programs.

21 So I think it's that marrying of the  
22 opportunity for our companies that need a  
23 talented workforce and skilled workforce to  
24 meet with our campuses, develop the kind of

1           curricula and programs, create those summer  
2           opportunity programs.

3                     And so one of the things that we're  
4           going to do is invest in a position where we  
5           actually really help Senior Vice Chancellor  
6           Johanna Duncan-Poitier and Senior Vice  
7           Chancellor Grace Wang go out and develop more  
8           of those kind of partnerships. I mean,  
9           that's really what it's going to take.

10                    And we've been successful at doing  
11           that. We have many of these companies. We  
12           just need another order of magnitude and  
13           scale. So we need to put some more resources  
14           into it, and that's what we're going to do.

15                    ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: For the cost of  
16           accommodation, what is the need, do you  
17           think, for students who have disabilities,  
18           especially if we're going -- you know, we  
19           have a lot of outreach to veterans and stuff,  
20           and there's a range of accommodations that  
21           are needed. And I've been to some schools  
22           where they say they just have to do some  
23           really basic things like widen areas so that  
24           people in wheelchairs can get through.

1                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Sure, yeah. You  
2 know, I can come back to you on the number of  
3 projects that we're doing throughout SUNY. I  
4 do know we have 32,000 students that are  
5 coming to SUNY, which I'm so proud of that we  
6 have this opportunity for all students to be  
7 successful here. We can break it down by  
8 campus and we can look at the kind of  
9 projects and investment that we're doing to  
10 accommodate.

11                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: That's very  
12 helpful. Thank you so much, and thank you  
13 for your very responsive answers.

14                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Thank you very  
15 much.

16                   CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: So, Chancellor,  
17 thank you so much for being here. We look  
18 forward to having some of the follow-up  
19 answers that members have asked for. And  
20 look forward to continuing to work with you  
21 as we go forward. Thank you so much.

22                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: And I with you.

23                   Thank you all very much. Thanks so  
24 much for your interest and for your support.

1           It means the world to us. As I said when I  
2           started, we got momentum.

3                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: And for your  
4           endurance.

5                   CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

6                   CHANCELLOR JOHNSON: Thank you all.

7                   CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: So next we'll  
8           have Félix Rodríguez, the chancellor of the  
9           City University of New York. We'll just give  
10          people a couple of moments to stretch their  
11          legs and leave as we wait for the chancellor.

12                   (Pause.)

13                   CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: If we can  
14          settle down. And the people who are leaving,  
15          if you could leave, because the voices carry.

16                   So, Chancellor, feel free to begin.

17                   CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Thank you.

18                   Good morning, buenos días, Chairs  
19          Krueger, Weinstein, Stavisky and Glick and  
20          members of the Senate Finance, Assembly Ways  
21          and Means and the Senate and Assembly Higher  
22          Education Committees, staff and guests. My  
23          name is Félix Matos Rodríguez, chancellor of  
24          the City University of New York.

1                   I am joined this morning by Executive  
2 Vice Chancellor and University Provost José  
3 Luis Cruz, and Senior Vice Chancellor and our  
4 Chief Financial Officer Matthew Sapienza.

5                   I am now in my tenth month as  
6 chancellor, so this is my first appearance to  
7 provide testimony before this body. For  
8 those of you who do not know me, I am a  
9 historian by training and started my CUNY  
10 career 20 years ago as a professor at Hunter  
11 College and director of its Center for Puerto  
12 Rican Studies. I later served for five years  
13 as the president of Hostos Community College  
14 and then five years as president of  
15 Queens College.

16                   After two decades in a variety of  
17 roles on several CUNY campuses, I am honored  
18 to oversee the premier and largest urban  
19 public university in the United States,  
20 serving half a million students, 20,000  
21 faculty and 25,000 staff at our 11 four-year  
22 colleges, seven community colleges, and seven  
23 graduate and professional schools.

24                   On behalf of the entire CUNY

1 community, I want to thank Governor Cuomo,  
2 the State Senate, and the State Assembly for  
3 your past support, which has enabled CUNY to  
4 deliver strong results for our students and  
5 the citizens of New York.

6 I am pleased to share with you some of  
7 our important recent achievements and to  
8 outline our priorities, plans and goals for  
9 the coming fiscal year and beyond.

10 In my first year as chancellor, I have  
11 built an exceptional leadership team of  
12 experienced and diverse professionals who  
13 mirror the students and the city we serve.  
14 In addition to the two members of my  
15 leadership team sitting here, let me  
16 introduce you to two other members who are  
17 here today. Sitting in the audience are  
18 Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Operating  
19 Officer Hector Batista, and Senior Vice  
20 Chancellor and Special Counsel Glenda Grace.

21 My administration will also have the  
22 rare opportunity to shape the future of CUNY  
23 leadership for years to come. We have nine  
24 presidential vacancies, and yesterday I named

1 the first of those nine: The Board of  
2 Trustees approved a new president for Baruch  
3 College, Dr. David Wu, currently the provost  
4 and executive vice president of George Mason  
5 University. Dr. Wu is an accomplished  
6 scholar who makes history by becoming the  
7 first Asian-American president of a CUNY  
8 school. I expect to make about half a dozen  
9 presidential appointments this year.

10 At a time of growing inequality, CUNY  
11 has become a national leader in promoting  
12 upward social and economic mobility. In  
13 2019, six CUNY colleges placed in the top 25  
14 nationally on collegeNET's 2019 Social  
15 Mobility Index, with Baruch College ranking  
16 number one for a fifth straight year. CUNY  
17 also dominated both the Forbes and Wall  
18 Street Journal's "best-value" college  
19 rankings.

20 Our history of delivering  
21 high-quality, affordable education and  
22 promoting social mobility help explain why  
23 freshman enrollment rose 3 percent this past  
24 fall, countering the national trend. It was

1 part of a 17 percent increase since 2010 -- a  
2 decade in which freshman enrollment for both  
3 public and private universities nationwide  
4 remained largely flat.

5 Also in my first year we made a vital  
6 investment in the future with our historic  
7 agreement with our largest union, the  
8 Professional Staff Congress, which provided  
9 well-earned increases for our faculty and,  
10 perhaps most notably, reaffirmed the  
11 importance of adjunct faculty -- not only  
12 with substantial pay increases, but with  
13 provisions that advanced our efforts to  
14 further integrate them into academic and  
15 campus life. With these advances, we are  
16 blazing a trail for higher education  
17 nationwide.

18 We have also started to identify key  
19 priority areas that establish a foundation  
20 for a bold vision for CUNY over the next  
21 10 years. We will be laying out our ideas in  
22 the coming year with input from all our  
23 stakeholders. But even before then, we will  
24 get a head start with moves that increase our

1 focus on pedagogy and improve the craft of  
2 teaching, and others that expand  
3 career-engagement initiatives so that CUNY  
4 students have the same opportunities for  
5 internships and career paths that young  
6 people from more affluent families have.

7 We are pleased that the Governor's  
8 Executive Budget includes an increase of  
9 \$24.3 million in funding for employee fringe  
10 benefits and continues current-year funding  
11 levels for our critical Opportunity Programs,  
12 SEEK and College Discovery. The budget  
13 proposal also continues to include \$4 million  
14 for Open Educational Resources, which is  
15 funding that we have leveraged to  
16 significantly reduce the costs of textbooks  
17 for our students. Our students saved  
18 \$49 million in textbook costs from 2017 to  
19 2019, which amounts to students saving \$7 for  
20 every \$1 invested by the State of New York.

21 We are also grateful that the  
22 Executive Budget proposes to raise the  
23 income-eligibility cap for the Excelsior  
24 Scholarship and that it would make more

1 community college students eligible for  
2 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program  
3 benefits, or SNAP. The Governor's budget  
4 moves us closer to a future in which quality  
5 higher education is accessible to all low-  
6 and middle-income New Yorkers at no cost, and  
7 we thank him for his leadership.

8 For our community colleges, we are  
9 very thankful that the Legislature has  
10 supported base aid increases in recent budget  
11 cycles. The university seeks your help in  
12 this again.

13 Now I would like to take a few minutes  
14 to address tuition. The capacity to adapt  
15 and plan ahead is critical to effective  
16 leadership, and we welcome the flexibility  
17 that the Governor's proposal to extend the  
18 Predictable Tuition Policy through 2025 gives  
19 us. The current proposed tuition increase of  
20 \$100 per semester would generate \$36 million  
21 for the senior colleges for the next fiscal  
22 year.

23 Students who are in the most need will  
24 have any additional out-of-pocket tuition

1 costs significantly defrayed or covered  
2 completely by New York State's generous  
3 financial aid programs -- TAP, Excelsior,  
4 SEEK, College Discovery, and the Peralta  
5 DREAM Act -- along with federal Pell grants.

6 We are proud of our affordability and  
7 the value that we are able to offer our  
8 students. Two out of three CUNY  
9 undergraduates do not pay for tuition out of  
10 pocket, and three of four of our graduates  
11 leave debt-free. As such, even with the  
12 proposed adjustments, CUNY's tuition will  
13 remain of high value, even as it will  
14 continue to be much lower than any other  
15 university systems throughout the country.

16 As I mentioned, CUNY has earned high  
17 regard as a national model in promoting  
18 social and economic mobility. For it to  
19 remain so in a rapidly changing world, the  
20 university must maintain our ability to  
21 innovate and serve our core mission. With  
22 the continued support of the Governor and  
23 you, I am confident that we can do so.

24 Regarding the university's capital

1 program, we appreciate the Governor's  
2 Executive Budget commitment to CUNY's  
3 infrastructure needs, including its  
4 \$284 million investment in critical  
5 maintenance for senior colleges and the  
6 \$64 million in matching funds for community  
7 colleges. These will continue to make a  
8 significant difference in upgrades and  
9 replacements for aging, mission-critical  
10 elements of these buildings.

11 We are excited by the opportunities  
12 offered by Governor Cuomo's proposal for a  
13 two-to-one capital matching program, which  
14 offers a unique opportunity for our senior  
15 colleges to leverage private funds to  
16 generate state support for new building  
17 initiatives.

18 We have always been at the forefront  
19 of integrating sustainability and energy  
20 efficiency into our campus operations, our  
21 curriculum and our research. That is why  
22 CUNY is currently investing over \$340 million  
23 in dozens of energy performance capital  
24 projects on its campuses that will

1 significantly reduce emissions. But we have  
2 a challenge with our aged building stock,  
3 which includes 300 buildings, totaling  
4 29 million square feet. They range in age  
5 from one year old to over 100 years old, with  
6 the average building age exceeding 50 years.  
7 That is why, over the past 10 years, CUNY has  
8 focused on retro-commissioning a process to  
9 improve the efficiency of an existing  
10 building's equipment and systems.

11 Looking to the future, CUNY continues  
12 its focus on leveraging its capital funds in  
13 the upcoming five-year capital plan for  
14 projects that will reduce CUNY's carbon  
15 footprint and energy consumption. CUNY's  
16 capital program and initiatives reflect the  
17 university's commitment to sustainable  
18 technology and energy efficiency, including  
19 CUNY's commitment to develop a plan to meet  
20 the Climate Leadership and Community  
21 Protection Act goals.

22 CUNY is an unparalleled resource for  
23 the state and the city. The increasing  
24 investments that our funding partners have

1           made over the past few years have paid  
2           undeniable dividends. CUNY is finding new  
3           ways to help more students succeed  
4           academically, earn their degrees on time, and  
5           acquire the skills they need to build  
6           successful careers and fulfilling lives.  
7           There is also no question about the powerful  
8           impact that a dynamic CUNY has on all our  
9           citizens. Now is the time we need to be an  
10          even better and bolder university, and we ask  
11          for your continued support in that  
12          aspiration.

13                        That concludes my testimony, and I'll  
14          be very happy to answer your questions.

15                        CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: So thank you.  
16          We're going to go to Deborah Glick, our  
17          Higher Ed chair.

18                        ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: It's great to  
19          see you, Chancellor.

20                        CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Good to see you  
21          too.

22                        ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Thank you for  
23          being here, and thank you for your testimony,  
24          which covered a number of areas.

1           In the capital, obviously you have a  
2           lot of owned space but also leased space, and  
3           I'm wondering, considering the money that has  
4           been allocated, what's your backlog, how long  
5           do you think it will take, how many years of  
6           providing this level of resources, for you to  
7           bring the campuses up to where you would like  
8           them to be? So it's nice that we've done  
9           this, hopefully we could add more. What is  
10          the trajectory for capital needs at CUNY,  
11          both the critical maintenance and really any  
12          new builds?

13                 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So thank you so  
14          much for your question, and you know, thank  
15          you also for your leadership in the Higher Ed  
16          Committee. And always, you know, proud to be  
17          talking to a Queens College alum, and bring  
18          you greetings on behalf of the 663 CUNY  
19          students who live in your district and are  
20          happy for your leadership.

21                 We believe that the \$284 million  
22          provided in critical maintenance is about the  
23          same amount that we received last year, and  
24          it's a great step in moving to sort of build

1 up our critical infrastructure needs. I'll  
2 be happy to provide you -- because I think  
3 it's something that is in the five-year  
4 capital budget request that we put together,  
5 we have the actual number of what, you know,  
6 what that capped critical maintenance need  
7 is, so I can provide that to your office  
8 later.

9 One of the things that we've been  
10 exploring too is also the capacity to be able  
11 to spend all those dollars in an efficient  
12 way too, so that we can -- when we receive  
13 funding from the state for capital, that we  
14 can move quickly on the projects and get to  
15 them.

16 So I'll be happy to provide you --  
17 because we have quantified that number of  
18 sort of what it will take to be in a state of  
19 good repair, and I can provide that number to  
20 your office.

21 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: And include in  
22 that if there are additional specific areas  
23 that have to do with accommodations for  
24 students with disabilities. CUNY has been a

1 very open door, but sometimes the door isn't  
2 wide enough.

3           So we'd like to know what additional  
4 specific dollars are needed for -- whether  
5 it's technological upgrades for kids with  
6 either hearing impairment or visual  
7 impairment. So we understand that what you  
8 do for one cohort doesn't necessarily meet  
9 the need for others, so we would very much  
10 like to --

11           CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: We'd be  
12 delighted to do that.

13           And in my previous life I -- for  
14 example, at Queens College I can tell you how  
15 important some projects that would seem  
16 fairly basic to some others -- about sort of  
17 making sure that our bathrooms are  
18 ADA-compliant, small other things like making  
19 sure that the ramps on the sidewalks are done  
20 in the right way so that students with  
21 disabilities that have to use their wheel  
22 equipment can move forward.

23           We know how much that means to really  
24 create an accessible campus, so we're doing

1 work all across our campuses to do that.  
2 We'll be happy to quantify that. And we also  
3 know how critical that is.

4 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Obviously the  
5 ASAP program has been a model across the  
6 country, and we have to fight for it all the  
7 time. There's always a cut.

8 So perhaps you could provide the  
9 committee with how many students have moved  
10 through ASAP over whatever particular period  
11 of time, how many are currently enrolled, how  
12 many have graduated, how many have moved on  
13 to a four-year school. We want to make the  
14 case that this is a model that should be  
15 replicated. I know a lot of the other  
16 schools, some of the private schools, see  
17 that and say, That's the kind of thing we  
18 need to do to get some of our at-risk  
19 students over the finish line. So that would  
20 be very helpful.

21 You had some specific details on how  
22 many -- what you're doing around the  
23 sustainability. And again, when you're  
24 talking about you're investing 340 million --



1 systemwide, the number of full-time faculty  
2 is a little under 40 percent, and the number  
3 of adjuncts is a little higher than 60: I  
4 think like 39-61.

5 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Do you have a  
6 large number of graduate teaching assistants?

7 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Yes, we do. I  
8 mean, I don't have the exact number of those;  
9 we can provide that to your office.

10 And again, the issue of the adjuncts  
11 that you bring -- actually, on your first  
12 question of ASAP, I do have at least some --  
13 three out of four of your questions, I know  
14 the answers. So we have about 25,000  
15 currently, students on ASAP. They're about  
16 38 percent of our entire community college  
17 enrollment. So a very robust part of our  
18 community colleges are benefiting from ASAP.  
19 We have graduated about 58,000 students from  
20 ASAP over the duration of the program.

21 The data that you requested on their,  
22 you know, graduation and where they're going,  
23 that I don't have recorded to memory so we  
24 can clearly provide that.

1           We have been investing in leveraging  
2           resources. For example, we have a  
3           million-dollar grant from the Bank of  
4           New York Mellon to provide transfer  
5           scholarships for ASAP students, sort of  
6           continuing the success of those students that  
7           have successfully moved through ASAP, and  
8           they're able to go to one of our four-year  
9           institutions.

10           As you know, ASAP has doubled the  
11           graduation rate of students who are  
12           comparable from a three-year graduation rate  
13           of 53 percent for the ASAP students and  
14           25 percent for comparable students over that.

15           So it's been an incredibly successful  
16           program. We are actually providing technical  
17           assistance to several states, there are about  
18           seven states that are replicating ASAP-like  
19           programs, and CUNY is their technical  
20           assistance partner. Three community colleges  
21           in Ohio just got a grant to do that. And we  
22           continue to learn from our ASAP program to  
23           see what parts of that are things that we can  
24           replicate with other student groups.

1                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: A lot of  
2 colleges are facing pretty wholesale  
3 retirement age for an awful lot of faculty.  
4 Being in New York City, you may have a better  
5 record on diversity than perhaps SUNY, which  
6 is far-flung. But where are you in terms of  
7 a diverse faculty?

8                   CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So there's --  
9 there's two ways to address that. One is  
10 that our numbers compare extremely favorably  
11 to universities all over the nation. I mean,  
12 we have an extremely diverse faculty, and we  
13 can provide the exact numbers and the  
14 breakdown by groups -- I know I have that in  
15 a table here someplace.

16                   But we have a higher responsibility  
17 precisely because we serve New York City, and  
18 we're not where we need to be. So we need to  
19 have faculty, students -- I mean, we do have  
20 faculty and staff that look like the students  
21 that we have in the classroom. We need  
22 administrators that can do that too. The  
23 great thing is that we'd be making a  
24 significant investment systemwide in that.

1                   And in the last five years, the  
2                   numbers of new faculty that we hire, which is  
3                   the key engine that's going to get that  
4                   percentage higher, has increased by over  
5                   50 percent. So in the last five years, a  
6                   vast majority of our hires have been coming  
7                   from underrepresented groups, and so that's  
8                   continued to move the dial. And we're very  
9                   proud of the work that our college presidents  
10                  have been doing in that front.

11                  On that question, that is why I also  
12                  began my testimony making reference to the  
13                  importance of having a diverse team. If I'm  
14                  going to be holding presidents accountable,  
15                  if I'm going to be talking to the system  
16                  about hiring more diverse faculty and staff,  
17                  the team that's around me has to represent  
18                  that diversity. The presidents in the system  
19                  have to represent that diversity. And I'm  
20                  very proud of the record that we have built  
21                  so far in getting individuals of great  
22                  credentials to join the administrative team,  
23                  and I think that sets the tone for the rest  
24                  of the system.

1 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

2 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Thank you very  
3 much.

4 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

5 We go to the Senate now.

6 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

7 Higher Ed Chair Toby Stavisky.

8 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

9 Welcome back.

10 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Great to see  
11 you.

12 SENATOR STAVISKY: Good to see you,  
13 and thank you for mentioning Queens College.

14 (Laughter.)

15 SENATOR STAVISKY: First of all, you  
16 indicated you would provide follow-up  
17 information to the Assembly, and I ask that  
18 you send a copy to the Senate also, because  
19 some of those issues are issues that I was  
20 going to bring up.

21 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Absolutely.

22 SENATOR STAVISKY: Real quick,  
23 remediation. Because I'm -- I know the  
24 numbers are getting better, but I don't think

1 we're there yet. What are the percentages or  
2 the costs of remediation, both at the  
3 four-year and two-year colleges?

4 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So remediation  
5 is a very, very important topic and there's  
6 been a significant investment in CUNY to move  
7 away from remedial courses and more to  
8 co-curricular courses, which is where the  
9 field indicates is the better approach to get  
10 students up to speed more quickly and  
11 actually allow them to go into regular  
12 courses in a timely fashion and spend less of  
13 their financial aid with remedial courses.

14 We can provide you details on the  
15 numbers in each of our community colleges,  
16 and we're very proud of the progress that we  
17 have made in moving from remedial courses to  
18 co-curricular courses. We are hoping that in  
19 the near future we can be in a place where  
20 all of our formerly remedial courses are done  
21 in a co-curricular way. So we're talking to  
22 our community college presidents. And I have  
23 some experience, having served as the  
24 president at Hostos Community College, about

1           how important it is to do that in a timely  
2           fashion, so we can provide you those figures.

3                   SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

4                   CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: I'm also very  
5           proud of our partnerships with the DOE.

6                   We just began a pilot program, it's  
7           CUNY On Track, with funding from the Carnegie  
8           Endowment, and that is a way to see if we can  
9           use some of the lessons that we have learned  
10          with some of the programs like CUNY Start,  
11          Math Start, that we have shown that they're  
12          very good at remedial, can we start with our  
13          schools in 10th grade, in 11th grade, letting  
14          the students know whether they're on track or  
15          not -- and then, if they're not, do some  
16          interventions, in partnership with the DOE,  
17          that would get them to be college-ready by  
18          the time they graduate, meaning there would  
19          be less remediation when they get to us. So  
20          we're very excited about those partnerships  
21          with the DOE.

22                   SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you. Yes,  
23          I've always felt that this should not be a  
24          cost on CUNY but on DOE.

1                   You mentioned the Governor's 24 or  
2                   \$25 million allocation for the maintenance of  
3                   effort to fund the contract, et cetera. But  
4                   there are additional costs mandated through  
5                   the contract and not funded. How do you  
6                   propose to fund all of those other costs?  
7                   Traditionally we've done it in an MOE bill or  
8                   a pay bill, as we used to call it.

9                   CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So thank you  
10                  for your question, and let me begin by saying  
11                  how important it was for me and how proud I  
12                  was to be able to work with our partners in  
13                  the Professional Staff Congress early on in  
14                  my tenure to get that contract done.

15                 SENATOR STAVISKY: Good.

16                 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: I mean, we have  
17                 now, you know, five years of stability on the  
18                 labor front. I believe that we have also all  
19                 of the other contracts with the rest of our  
20                 labor unions also ratified, so I'm very, very  
21                 proud of that track record. I think it was  
22                 an important signal to our adjuncts to show  
23                 that we value them, and to be able to  
24                 compensate them in a fairer way.

1           We included the cost for the contract  
2           in our budget request, and we look forward to  
3           working with you all throughout this  
4           legislative session to be able to sort of  
5           meet all those needs.

6           SENATOR STAVISKY: You discussed the  
7           ASAP program, which I think is -- it's got  
8           the funding, the additional 2.5 million, I  
9           think -- the funding has to be found, whether  
10          it's with the city or with the state.

11          But there are other programs -- the  
12          childcare, the College for Labor and Urban  
13          Studies, CUNY LEADS, there were other costs.  
14          How do you propose to take up the gap that's  
15          caused by these program -- the budget cuts?

16          CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Thank you for  
17          that question and bringing those very  
18          important issues to bear.

19          On the issue of childcare, as those of  
20          you who are in the -- who are part of the  
21          hearing and know me, very dear to my heart.  
22          As a former commissioner of family service  
23          for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, I was in  
24          charge of certifying childcare and day

1 centers in Puerto Rico and made it my habit  
2 then, as commissioner, and at Hostos in our  
3 childcare center, and at Queens, to go read  
4 and visit and spend time, because I know how  
5 important that is for our students to be able  
6 to know that their children are taken care of  
7 so they can study.

8 I know that now I need to find a place  
9 where I can go read because, you know, the  
10 child center offices have a daycare, I have  
11 to visit some of the campuses to do that. So  
12 we look forward to working with all of you to  
13 be able to restore those vital funds.

14 We're also looking into other  
15 partnerships so that we can expand the work  
16 that we do around the issue of childcare. I  
17 am part of an Aspen Institute group that  
18 works on two-generational strategies to  
19 combat poverty. So we're looking into some  
20 funding to be able to be creative to work in  
21 our centers and also with our students who  
22 are parents.

23 SENATOR STAVISKY: We touched upon the  
24 capital, the 200 million for CUNY, the

1 capital two-for-one match. Which means that  
2 you're going to have to raise the \$1 million.  
3 And you and I discussed that briefly prior to  
4 this hearing, because I certainly don't want  
5 to see that go unmatched, so to speak.

6 How do you propose to raise -- that's  
7 a lot of money for the -- raising that  
8 \$1 million match for the construction. And I  
9 must say I think it's extremely critical  
10 because so many of the buildings at CUNY,  
11 they were built 50, 60, 70 years ago, and  
12 critical maintenance is not sufficient. You  
13 need some shovels in the ground, and you need  
14 some new construction. How are you going to  
15 do this?

16 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So thank you  
17 for your question. And I know the interest  
18 in capital funding for CUNY has been an  
19 interest of you historically, so you've been  
20 a partner with us in advocating for those  
21 resources.

22 I believe that the Governor's proposed  
23 two-for-one program presents a great  
24 opportunity for us at CUNY. First, we've

1           been able -- now we'd be able to go to donors  
2           that would have an incentive to support some  
3           because they know their dollars are going to  
4           go a longer term, right? We didn't have that  
5           incentive before when we go out there talking  
6           to potential donors about that. Donors like  
7           to donate to capital. They like to have  
8           buildings and rooms and spaces named after  
9           them.

10                        So I think that the combination of  
11           that, the philanthropic spirit that combines  
12           many of our alumni that have been supportive  
13           of the work that we do at CUNY -- and now we  
14           have an added incentive to be able to do  
15           that. We look forward to working with all of  
16           you and with the Executive in creating the  
17           most flexible terms for that matching program  
18           so that we have the utmost flexibility, and  
19           concur with you that the capital needs are  
20           really critical.

21                        As I mentioned to you, our enrollment  
22           has increased significantly in the last  
23           decade. Our campuses are anchor institutions  
24           in all those communities, so it's not just

1           that they're used for classroom space, but  
2           they're used for outside community groups  
3           that use our space that convene there. Many  
4           of the elected officials also, you know, use  
5           our facilities for town halls and things like  
6           that. So those buildings take an extra  
7           beating, so they need to be repaired. So I  
8           would look forward to working with you on  
9           that.

10                         But we think that the two-for-one  
11           presents a great opportunity to tap into  
12           resources that now would now be motivated to  
13           give.

14                         SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

15                         At the December hearing at  
16           250 Broadway, the students spoke very  
17           graphically about the crumbling  
18           infrastructure. They spoke about how they  
19           learn -- classes were being held in trailers  
20           and all sorts of situations. And I sent you  
21           the material, and I appreciate your response.  
22           But I emphasize that these students should  
23           not have to try to study under very trying --  
24           it's hard enough if they are -- have food

1           insecurity, housing insecurity, and then come  
2           to school and don't have a decent classroom.

3                    CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: I couldn't  
4           agree more with you, Senator. Thank you.

5                    SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

6                    CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.  
7           Assembly.

8                    CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We go to  
9           Assemblyman Epstein.

10                   ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Chancellor,  
11           thank you for being here. I really  
12           appreciate all your dedication.

13                    So just -- are you happy with the  
14           state funding the Governor has proposed for  
15           CUNY?

16                    CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So thank you  
17           for your question, and great to see you  
18           again.

19                    ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: You too.

20                    CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: And I bring you  
21           greetings on behalf of the 1,690 CUNY  
22           students that are in your district.

23                    (Laughter.)

24                    CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So thank you

1 for your support and representing them well.

2 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Thank you.

3 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: The budget  
4 provides some exciting opportunities for us.  
5 The -- the funds for the Opportunity Programs  
6 is very, very dear to my heart, and I've seen  
7 at the campuses how important the SEEK  
8 program, for example, is to so many of our  
9 students and opening the door --

10 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Chancellor, I'm  
11 sorry, I only get five minutes --

12 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Okay.

13 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: -- so I don't --  
14 so you think it's fine, it's adequate, is  
15 that what you're saying?

16 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: We're excited  
17 and we look forward to working with all of  
18 you here to continue to find additional  
19 resources.

20 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Because, as you  
21 know, Baruch is in my district -- and thank  
22 you for the appointment, I look forward to  
23 working with him in this stark moment that we  
24 have.

1           But I go to the buildings and, like we  
2           hear, crumbling infrastructure, students who  
3           are telling us they won't eat today, right?  
4           Students are saying, I can't afford to either  
5           pay the books fee or the mental health  
6           services fee. And when they are now paying a  
7           new fee, they don't even have access to real  
8           mental health services. So the waiting list  
9           is forever, and people who have serious  
10          mental health needs are being unmet.

11                 So I want to know, really, can we rely  
12          on you to come push for real funding?  
13          Because students really need additional funds  
14          to be able to have a high-quality education.

15                 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So again, thank  
16          you for the question and for your commitment.  
17          I look forward to introducing you to  
18          President Wu at the appropriate time. I  
19          think that I'm very proud of that first  
20          appointment and I'm sure he's going to do  
21          great things for Baruch and take it to the  
22          next level.

23                 We have been working very, very hard  
24          in making sure that many of those needs that

1           you identified are met throughout the system.  
2           If you look at programs that help students  
3           with their transportation costs, right, in  
4           ASAP those 25,000 students all get free  
5           MetroCards.

6                     ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN:  But -- but  
7           the -- I do appreciate that.  But the kids  
8           outside of ASAP and the kids who we hear  
9           from, from the part-timers, right.  You know,  
10          I -- I -- I don't want to make it -- I  
11          appreciate a rosy picture, but it's not what  
12          we're hearing from students or from faculty.  
13          We're hearing the opposite story.

14                    So is there something that we're  
15          missing here where the students and the  
16          faculty are saying "We're struggling" and  
17          you're providing a real rosy approach to it?

18                    CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ:  I -- I -- I --  
19          I wouldn't necessarily characterize my  
20          approach as rosy.  I'm just telling you all  
21          the efforts that we're doing in the different  
22          fronts, on transportation, on the cost of  
23          books.  I mean, the Open -- the funding, as I  
24          mentioned to you, \$48 million saved on

1 students' -- on books, that's about \$100 per  
2 student in the past two years. That  
3 investment from you all, it goes to allowing  
4 students to free up that money to do other  
5 things.

6 On the food insecurity front, we are  
7 fighting that on a number of fronts. We have  
8 an initiative, a pilot program that we're  
9 doing with the City Council that provides a  
10 thousand students with vouchers of \$400 per  
11 semester to address food insecurity.

12 The work that we've been doing in  
13 making food pantries available, we have  
14 funding from the Petrie Foundation for the  
15 food pantries. We have funding from the  
16 Petrie Foundation to explore more ways to  
17 support the students.

18 One thing that in our budget request,  
19 when it put the category of more resources  
20 into wellness, we want folks on our campus --  
21 we have data that 70 percent of our students  
22 who are eligible for SNAP might not be  
23 seeking that benefit. We need additional  
24 staff to be able to connect the students to

1 all those things. And that is why our budget  
2 request talks about exactly those kinds of  
3 issues.

4 And I want to point out other things  
5 that we're doing, and we are conscious that  
6 we need to do more.

7 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: So great, I do  
8 appreciate it. And you know you have  
9 partners here to help you do more.

10 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Absolutely.

11 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Just -- I wonder  
12 if there -- you know, with additional  
13 resources and dedicated funding, I know we  
14 hear that a lot, with the TAP gap, really  
15 closing the TAP gap, helping expand ASAP --  
16 do you think if we had dedicated funding  
17 you'd be in a position to be able to expand  
18 ASAP, provide additional resources to  
19 students for books, food insecurity, housing  
20 insecurity -- we hear story after story of  
21 kids who are homeless who are just trying to  
22 go to school, kids who just aren't eating and  
23 trying to get to school. These are real  
24 stories that I know you know about, and we

1 want to make those stories that the  
2 experience of that doesn't happen, so people  
3 can actually graduate and not have these  
4 insecurities and really become productive  
5 members in our society.

6 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So we're  
7 totally on the same page. And that's why in  
8 our budget request we have an entire category  
9 sort of dedicated to precisely providing that  
10 kind of support.

11 On the issue of the TAP gap, which you  
12 address, also in our budget request we know  
13 that the -- that the gap is -- it would be an  
14 \$86 million estimate on the next year, 78 in  
15 this current year. And we know that that's a  
16 big, that's a big number, so in our budget  
17 request we suggested beginning with 9 and  
18 sort of phasing it in to be able to get  
19 additional resources.

20 So again, at the end of the day, we  
21 concur that if we have more full-time  
22 faculty, if we have more advising, more  
23 counselors, more individuals to be able to  
24 connect students to resources, you know,

1 we'll have the university that we all aspire  
2 to.

3 Thank you.

4 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

5 Senate?

6 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

7 Senator John Liu.

8 SENATOR LIU: Thank you, Madam Chair.

9 Welcome, Félix.

10 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Good to see  
11 you, sir.

12 SENATOR LIU: We've known each other  
13 for a long time.

14 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: That's correct.

15 SENATOR LIU: Congratulations, or my  
16 condolences, take whichever one you like.

17 (Laughter.)

18 SENATOR LIU: Even though we've known  
19 each other for a long time, nothing's  
20 personal here because we've got issues.  
21 Right? And let me ask, who -- who appointed  
22 you?

23 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: The Board of  
24 Trustees.

1                   SENATOR LIU: The Board of Trustees,  
2                   okay. Interesting.

3                   Who nominated you?

4                   CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Nominated me  
5                   for the job?

6                   SENATOR LIU: Yes.

7                   CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: I don't know.  
8                   That is -- you have to ask the search firm.

9                   SENATOR LIU: Okay. All right, good  
10                  answer.

11                  (Laughter.)

12                  SENATOR LIU: I think we -- I think we  
13                  know the Governor had something to do with it  
14                  too, right? A little bit. Yes, the Governor  
15                  had something to do with it?

16                  CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: I -- I -- I  
17                  have the full support of the Governor and of  
18                  the Mayor, yes.

19                  SENATOR LIU: Okay. And the Governor  
20                  is proposing this budget that Assemblymember  
21                  Epstein asked you about.

22                  So look, I'm just saying that we know  
23                  you have to be a gentleman here, but I know  
24                  deep in your heart you are deeply upset and

1           disappointed at the paltry amount that the  
2           Governor is proposing for CUNY funding. You  
3           don't have to answer that.

4                     But Harvey, I really believe that, all  
5           right? Because the funding is not enough.  
6           It's just not enough. And we keep asking our  
7           students to pay more and more and more. I  
8           mean, for goodness sake, they're resorting to  
9           having to hold bake sales, bake sales, so  
10          that they can take care of their tuition.

11                    The problem is this. The problem is  
12          that for too many years, operating costs for  
13          CUNY has -- the percentage of operating costs  
14          for CUNY paid out of tuitions and fees keeps  
15          going up. So does your administration think  
16          that at some point this could be reversed, or  
17          is it just going to keep going up and up and  
18          up?

19                    CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So let me talk  
20          to you from the bottom of my heart. Right?  
21          And first, I'm deeply proud of serving as the  
22          chancellor of the City University of  
23          New York. I think there's no institution of  
24          higher ed in the country that has a better

1 track record of social mobility, of moving  
2 individuals that come from the lowest  
3 socioeconomic index to the middle class and  
4 above. That's been documented. That is the  
5 core of our mission, which is done through a  
6 formula of a high-quality education and  
7 access.

8 The State of New York has been a  
9 champion nationally in investing in higher  
10 education, and that is the work of the  
11 Governor and that's the work also of the  
12 Assembly and the Senate in providing funding  
13 for all of us. So I am happy and proud for  
14 that support and will continue to advance  
15 that cause moving forward.

16 I am also proud of a university where  
17 two out of three students do not pay any  
18 tuition. Right? That is the national model  
19 for our country. Three out of four of our  
20 students graduate debt-free. Right? Very  
21 few --

22 SENATOR LIU: I know, but we keep  
23 hearing that --

24 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Very few

1 college presidents can actually make those  
2 numbers.

3 So from the bottom of my heart, I am  
4 very proud of those numbers. I wake up every  
5 day to help to continue to transform this  
6 university, in partnership with you, with  
7 additional --

8 SENATOR LIU: Is the implication of  
9 that to say that the \$200 or \$100 per  
10 semester tuition increases don't really  
11 matter, that they don't hurt? Because two  
12 out of three don't pay tuition or three out  
13 of four graduate debt-free, is that what  
14 you're trying to imply?

15 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So what I'm  
16 saying is that in the last four or five years  
17 in which we also had the discretion to raise  
18 tuition, right, the City University of  
19 New York has used that discretion very, very  
20 thoughtfully.

21 For four years there was no tuition  
22 increase in the community colleges. Right?  
23 That we had the authority to do that, it  
24 didn't mean that we used it all the time.

1           Every year we did a detailed budget analysis  
2           and we looked at the reality of our fiscal  
3           responsibilities and our student body, and we  
4           have used that authority judiciously, in a  
5           way that provides investments to the  
6           campuses.

7                     I want to make sure that the record is  
8           clear, those are the facts, that we have --  
9           at different times we have decided not to  
10          increase tuition. So --

11                    SENATOR LIU: I'm just trying to get a  
12          better handle about why tuition is being  
13          relied upon more and more to pay a larger  
14          share of the operating costs. That's what  
15          I'm trying to get at here.

16                    Is there any way to at least -- you  
17          know, is there any breakdown between the  
18          classroom aspect of CUNY costs and kind of  
19          administrative CUNY costs? Is there any kind  
20          of breakdown there?

21                    CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: In terms of the  
22          cost?

23                    SENATOR LIU: I think your deputy is  
24          nodding his head like "yes."

1 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Yeah, we can  
2 provide you those figures, yes.

3 SENATOR LIU: What I mean, what's --  
4 what percentage, roughly? Administrative  
5 costs 30 percent of the overall CUNY costs?  
6 Twenty percent? To the nearest 10 percent.  
7 We don't have to be that precise here.

8 CUNY CFO SAPIENZA: Administrative  
9 costs are, I would say, less than 10 percent  
10 of the overall costs.

11 SENATOR LIU: And has that been  
12 decreasing or increasing over the last, say,  
13 10 years?

14 CUNY CFO SAPIENZA: I would say it's  
15 probably been stable --

16 SENATOR LIU: About the same.

17 CUNY CFO SAPIENZA: (Nodding.)

18 SENATOR LIU: About the same. So  
19 CUNY costs overall continue to increase. But  
20 because tuition keeps paying -- is funding  
21 more and -- a larger and larger share of the  
22 overall costs, CUNY tuition is going up  
23 faster than these operating costs.

24 CUNY CFO SAPIENZA: Well, Senator Liu,

1 the one thing I just want to point out is  
2 that the budget request that we put forth for  
3 fiscal year '21 that was approved by a Board  
4 of Trustees, one of the things that we really  
5 looked at and that we were pleased that we  
6 were able to accomplish in the budget request  
7 is the amount of money that comes from our  
8 operating budget from tuition would stay  
9 stable within our budget request.

10 SENATOR LIU: Even though the last  
11 nine years it's gone up --

12 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: No, John, I'm  
13 sorry, you can't continue. He can just  
14 close.

15 SENATOR LIU: All right, thank you.  
16 Thank you.

17 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.  
18 Assembly.

19 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We go to  
20 Assemblyman Pichardo.

21 ASSEMBLYMAN PICHARDO: Thank you,  
22 Chancellor. Welcome. Congratulations again.

23 So I don't want to -- we're short on  
24 time, but I want to reiterate the concerns

1           that both my colleagues Senator Liu and  
2           Assemblymember Epstein have mentioned. So I  
3           add my voice to theirs.

4                        But with that being said, I kind of  
5           want to get a sense of -- you know, we passed  
6           the DREAM Act last year, which was a  
7           fantastic victory for this state. So in your  
8           sense and estimation, do you have a sense of  
9           how many students -- how many CUNY students  
10          have participated or taken advantage of the  
11          José Peralta DREAM Act so far?

12                       CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: We don't -- we  
13          don't have those numbers exactly. And that  
14          is, you know, sort of still a moving target.

15                       We work very closely with Dr. Linares  
16          and the entire team at HESC in making sure  
17          that -- you know, particularly as a new  
18          program that's being launched, there's always  
19          initially some kinks. So we're working very  
20          closely with that team to make sure that if  
21          we identify issues, we share them with them  
22          quickly so they can make the adjustment.

23                       One of the things that referred to our  
24          campuses, we also continue to -- but we've

1           been out there letting students know about  
2           the opportunity. I was particularly  
3           concerned about students that might have been  
4           at CUNY before and might have left --  
5           right? -- because they didn't have funding.  
6           And I assume that because the program is new,  
7           it only included new students. Right? So we  
8           are very aggressive in targeting the  
9           communications to both students who will be  
10          starting now, to some students that might  
11          have, you know, sort of left and come back.

12                     But we're very, very excited. I know  
13          that all of you worked very, very hard to get  
14          that funding approved. And obviously being  
15          named after a CUNY and Queens college alum  
16          and a dear friend means a lot to me  
17          personally too.

18                     ASSEMBLYMAN PICHARDO: Thank you.  
19          And, last question, I know it's been  
20          mentioned about the Opportunity Programs,  
21          especially ASAP. I think we mentioned that  
22          the Governor zeroed out the program. It's  
23          important that obviously we all raise our  
24          voice to make sure that we re-implement those

1 cuts, that this is a priority for not only  
2 the Legislature, but for the Executive.

3 And I know that for CUNY itself, it's  
4 important that we continue to support these  
5 students, particularly students who need the  
6 most help. Like in my district, I have the  
7 opportunity and the honor of representing  
8 Bronx Community College. So we need to make  
9 sure that they stay in the forefront.

10 Also, speaking of Bronx Community  
11 college, I've met with Dr. Isekenegbe many  
12 times on, obviously, the concerns of the  
13 capital needs for the campus. And I know  
14 CUNY has invested heavily within the Bronx  
15 Community College, but there's still a lot of  
16 pretty big capital needs, particularly on the  
17 issue of the central heating and cooling  
18 system. So I know we are trying to move  
19 forward and figure out investments and  
20 pathways to fund that.

21 But right now, where do you think is  
22 the biggest need in terms of Bronx Community  
23 College in terms of its capital needs?

24 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So again, thank

1           you for your support. And again, on behalf  
2           of your 4,181 CUNY students in your  
3           district --

4                         (Laughter.)

5                         ASSEMBLYMAN PICHARDO: You're really  
6           good at this.

7                         CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: -- I bring you  
8           greetings. And I know you know them, because  
9           I know that you are a presence in our campus  
10          and you've been a higher ed supporter and  
11          champion.

12                        And ASAP is particularly important for  
13          Bronx Community College because as you know,  
14          we are trying to use Bronx Community as a  
15          flagship of what a college would look like if  
16          almost, you know, most of the students could  
17          be supported by ASAP. And that experiment  
18          continues very, very well, that program of  
19          President Isekenegbe and his team. So it's  
20          very, very important for the future of ASAP  
21          that what we're doing at BCC continues to go  
22          well.

23                        BCC is one of the most beautiful  
24          campuses, and the investments in

1 infrastructure sometimes are the things that  
2 nobody sees, like the steam pipelines and the  
3 things that are not attractive, because you  
4 don't get to cut a ribbon when you do HVAC  
5 and those things. But they're indispensable  
6 to be able to support our students. So we're  
7 happy that the current budget provides  
8 critical maintenance funding to be able to  
9 continue those programs by the matching funds  
10 for the community colleges. It's important  
11 to put that up-front so that we can get the  
12 rest of the funding from the city.

13 You and I were there in the  
14 ribbon-cutting for the renovated swimming  
15 pool also at BCC, so we continue to invest in  
16 Bronx Community and our other campuses too.

17 ASSEMBLYMAN PICHARDO: All right, my  
18 time is up. Thank you.

19 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Thank you.

20 ASSEMBLYMAN PICHARDO: Thank you.

21 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

22 Before we go to the Senate, I just  
23 wanted to acknowledge that Assemblyman  
24 Colton, member of the Ways and Means

1           Committee, has been here for some time. And  
2           we also were joined by Assemblywoman McMahon.

3                   CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Great. And we've  
4           been joined by Senator Jim Gaughran.

5                   But our next questioner is Senator  
6           Robert Jackson.

7                   SENATOR JACKSON: Thank you, Madam  
8           Chair.

9                   Chancellor, good afternoon.

10                   CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Good afternoon.  
11           Great to see you.

12                   SENATOR JACKSON: Good seeing you.  
13           And I'm happy that you're the chancellor of  
14           the City University of New York. And I say  
15           to you, I'm looking at some of your staff  
16           there -- and I know some of them -- and I'm  
17           looking at the diversity of the people that  
18           are sitting there. And that's a very  
19           positive sign, in my opinion.

20                   But I wanted to touch base with you  
21           about the budget. Do you think that the  
22           Executive Budget put forward by the Governor  
23           is enough in order to move forward CUNY in  
24           the direction that you want it to go?

1                   CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: I mean, clearly  
2                   we're excited about the funding to be able to  
3                   advance the agenda we've laid out as  
4                   chancellor. As I mentioned in my testimony,  
5                   there are some areas like career engagement  
6                   which are very, very clear and important to  
7                   me. I know that Chancellor Johnson in her  
8                   testimony about SUNY spoke about the  
9                   importance of internships, and it's  
10                  something -- a passion that we both have.  
11                  Internships, for example, we have examples  
12                  that students who participate in paid  
13                  internships, right, when they go get jobs,  
14                  they get that job faster and their first-time  
15                  pay is higher. Right?

16                  When 50 percent of the students you  
17                  serve are students who are the first one in  
18                  their family to go to college, that  
19                  opportunity is something that we need to  
20                  advance.

21                  Also, if you think about our price  
22                  point at the City University of New York, if  
23                  we have students going out there, getting  
24                  paid between \$3,000 and \$5,000 for a paid

1 internship, right, if you're a community  
2 college student, that's a year of tuition.  
3 Right? If your tuition is paid for, that's  
4 your money for transportation, for food  
5 insecurity.

6 So I'm excited about the chances that  
7 this budget allows to make investment in  
8 those areas, yes.

9 SENATOR JACKSON: Thank you. Thank  
10 you. Chancellor, I'm just going to try to  
11 ask some quick questions --

12 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Sorry.

13 SENATOR JACKSON: -- because my time  
14 is limited. I would love to have a dialogue  
15 with you, maybe I'll come to your office.

16 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: The door is  
17 always open. Or I'll go to yours.

18 SENATOR JACKSON: But with respect  
19 to I asked a question -- I'm asking you the  
20 question, the Professional Staff Congress  
21 just negotiated a contract, and you have a  
22 lot of adjuncts that were working and they  
23 were paid peanuts, in my opinion, and so they  
24 got an increase.

1           In the Executive Budget, was their  
2           contract paid for in the Executive Budget, or  
3           it must come out of the hides of all of the  
4           colleges?

5           CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So again, I am  
6           extremely proud of that contract, to be able  
7           to provide a 71 percent increase in the  
8           salary of the adjuncts. It's national news.

9           SENATOR JACKSON: It's about damn  
10          time. You know that, right?

11          CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: I agree with  
12          you. And also to create some mechanisms to  
13          allow them to be more integrated. I mean  
14          now, for example, they're going to be getting  
15          paid for their hours -- their office hours  
16          and things that we did not include before.

17          SENATOR JACKSON: But I just asked  
18          you, is it covered -- was that money for the  
19          contract put into the Executive Budget, or  
20          it's not? Because if not, then it has to  
21          come from somewhere. And so if I'm the  
22          president of City College, which is in my  
23          district -- along with Bryan Benjamin -- then  
24          I'm going to either have to cut staff or cut

1 programs.

2 So my question is, it wasn't covered,  
3 an increase in the budget? So how do you  
4 expect them to then deal with that if in fact  
5 it was not put in the budget?

6 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So we put -- in  
7 our budget request, we requested funding to  
8 be able to pay for our mandatory cost  
9 increases. We also included a request for  
10 the funding to be able to provide for the  
11 increase in our regular salary costs too.  
12 And I'm very confident that throughout this  
13 process, at the end of the journey, with your  
14 support, we'll be able to get a budget that  
15 I'll also be able to fund all those needs.

16 SENATOR JACKSON: Well -- and I read  
17 your statement as far as -- and I have CUNY  
18 PSC's testimony. They say, from a capital  
19 point of view, the needs are like \$5 billion.  
20 And the labs are so outdated, it's not really  
21 functioning at the level that they're  
22 supposed to. Do you agree or disagree with  
23 that?

24 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So we're happy

1 to have about \$284 million in critical  
2 capital needs -- to address needs like the  
3 ones that you identified. I'm sure that our  
4 good colleague Barbara Bowen will also  
5 identify when she provides her testimony.

6 And we're trying to address all those  
7 needs and make sure that the students have  
8 the facilities that they need. We're also  
9 working very hard with our campuses to  
10 expedite the usage of the funds when we get  
11 them, to be able to get to those construction  
12 projects and renovations quickly.

13 So we're aware of those needs and I  
14 look forward to, with your support,  
15 addressing them in the future.

16 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

17 SENATOR JACKSON: Thank you.

18 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Assembly.

19 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Assemblywoman  
20 Hyndman.

21 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Thank you,  
22 Madam Chair, and to Chancellor Matos  
23 Rodríguez, congratulations.

24 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Great to see

1           you.

2                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: I've -- we've  
3           come to know each other very well over your  
4           trajectory from Puerto Rico to the Bronx to  
5           Queens and now as the chancellor.

6                   So one of the things you mentioned is  
7           that you have to fill vacancies for nine CUNY  
8           presidents?

9                   CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Now eight.

10                  ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Now eight.

11                  CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Yes.

12                  ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: How close are  
13           you for -- I don't have a college in my  
14           district, but how close are you to the one  
15           that is close to my district, in making a  
16           decision there? That was one of my  
17           questions.

18                  The other question is, of the ASAP  
19           program that you talked about, you know, it's  
20           great. I don't think CUNY should have ever  
21           needed a program to make sure students are  
22           graduating on time, but apparently we did.

23                  What about the students that are not  
24           part of ASAP -- food equity, transportation?

1 A lot of these students are part-time;  
2 Excelsior doesn't apply to them. What is  
3 your take on those students and the  
4 remediation courses that I know you're trying  
5 to get away from, but we know are necessary.  
6 That's my second question.

7 And when it comes to OER, how -- I'm  
8 glad that the increase -- you've been able to  
9 save money on the increase from 2017 to 2019  
10 of those individuals. So you said \$1 for  
11 every \$7 is what you're saving?

12 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: The students --  
13 the students saved \$7 for every dollar that  
14 the State of New York put into the program.

15 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Oh, okay. How  
16 do you audit the materials that are in OER as  
17 a system? And how many CUNY students in my  
18 district?

19 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So for some  
20 reason, I need to get the number of students  
21 in your district, and we'll have that in a  
22 second. So let me take all your questions in  
23 turn.

24 First, we cannot do eight searches at

1           the same time, it would be impossible given  
2           the staffing that we have and also the number  
3           of trustees and others that determine those  
4           committees.

5                         So we are currently about to conclude  
6           the searches for the Graduate Center and  
7           Queens College. We've seen the final list  
8           for those searches. This week we just began  
9           the searches -- I was just at Borough of  
10          Manhattan Community College, LaGuardia  
11          Community College, and Queensborough  
12          Community College, so we began those three  
13          searches for community colleges this week.

14                        In April we will begin the searches  
15          for Lehman College, your college, and Guttman  
16          Community College. So -- and I am hoping  
17          that after that, no more of my presidents  
18          decide to retire and we catch a little break  
19          on the search business.

20                        (Laughter.)

21                        CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: You were asking  
22          about ASAP. One of the great things about  
23          being a university that really cares about  
24          its students is that we're always thinking to

1 see what lessons from ASAP we learned that we  
2 can apply in some of the other colleges.

3 Right?

4 So for example, a lesson from ASAP was  
5 the importance of the MetroCards. So at  
6 Guttman Community College, the 1,000 students  
7 that attend Guttman, through support from the  
8 City Council, get a free MetroCard. It's  
9 something that we learned, we replicated at  
10 Guttman.

11 Twelve thousand CUNY students have  
12 been able to benefit from the first phase of  
13 the Fair Fares program that New York City  
14 started. Right? Now the program will sort  
15 of roll out big, so we assume that we're  
16 going to have a substantial number of our  
17 students that are going to have a reduced  
18 transportation cost as a result of that  
19 program.

20 Overall, right now at CUNY between  
21 Fair Fares, ASAP and Guttman, about 38,000  
22 students have their MetroCards paid for free.  
23 So we're trying in every place that we can to  
24 learn what we learned from ASAP and see how

1           it applies to other students and other  
2           populations to be able to continue to advance  
3           our Student Success Agenda.

4                     You asked about OER, right? Those  
5           programs are implemented with the help of the  
6           campus library and the faculty. The faculty  
7           who participate, participate voluntarily.  
8           And I am proud to say that when faculty have  
9           seen the kinds of resources available and the  
10          impact it has on the students, the number of  
11          faculty who are interested in participating  
12          keeps increasing.

13                    But it is something that is done with  
14          full faculty input. Nobody is told, you  
15          know, which books they need to use. But I  
16          think that given the faculty that we have  
17          that come to CUNY in part because they want  
18          to teach the students that we have and  
19          they're committed to public higher education,  
20          they've been embracing this initiative. And  
21          the kinds of success and savings that you're  
22          seeing there couldn't have been done without  
23          the support of our faculty, and we hope that  
24          we can continue to expand that.

1 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

2 Senate?

3 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

4 Senator Gounardes.

5 SENATOR GOUNARDES: Good morning.

6 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Good morning,

7 Senator.

8 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Good afternoon.

9 SENATOR GOUNARDES: Good afternoon,

10 jeez. We'll be here all day. Good afternoon.

11 My parents met at Brooklyn College, I  
12 graduated Hunter College, and I had the  
13 privilege of teaching at Hunter College this  
14 past semester, so CUNY runs through my blood.

15 I want to ask what is the dollar  
16 amount for CUNY's budget today that is  
17 covered by student tuition or private  
18 sources? And what percentage is that of the  
19 total operating budget?

20 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So the  
21 percentage of -- your question is student --

22 SENATOR GOUNARDES: Student tuition  
23 and private support versus public support,  
24 essentially. So the dollar amount and the

1 percentage.

2 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So the  
3 undergrad percentage is 13 percent. The  
4 graduate percentage is 4 percent.

5 SENATOR GOUNARDES: Four percent.

6 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Yes.

7 SENATOR GOUNARDES: And what's the  
8 dollar amount for that?

9 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Do you want  
10 that now?

11 SENATOR GOUNARDES: Well, I guess --

12 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: We can get that  
13 to you. We have it here.

14 SENATOR GOUNARDES: Yeah, I mean I'd  
15 like to see that number now. Because I think  
16 it's relevant when we're talking about what  
17 it's going to take to fully fund the City  
18 University and what type of investment we  
19 should be making.

20 If we're talking about 13 or  
21 4 percent, that's not a lot that we can't  
22 make up through a robust public investment.  
23 So I want to know what that dollar amount is  
24 and what we should be thinking about in terms

1 of fully funding the operation of the  
2 university.

3 CUNY CFO SAPIENZA: The total amount  
4 that supports our operating budget -- which  
5 is 3.7 billion -- that comes from payments  
6 from students is \$736 million.

7 SENATOR GOUNARDES: Seven hundred  
8 thirty-six million. So if we found  
9 736 million, we could wipe out student  
10 tuition, essentially. Is that a fair  
11 assessment, a fair way of thinking about  
12 that?

13 CUNY CFO SAPIENZA: Seven hundred  
14 thirty-six million is the amount of money  
15 that students pay out of pocket.

16 SENATOR GOUNARDES: Okay. That's  
17 helpful, thank you.

18 I want to come back to the notion of  
19 the, you know, three-fourths of students  
20 graduate debt-free. And that sounds really  
21 great, but I guess at what cost is that? You  
22 know, if a student has to work two or three  
23 jobs or has to elongate their education by a  
24 year, two years or three years, does that --

1           how do we -- students shouldn't have to put  
2           themselves through wringer just to graduate  
3           on time and debt-free.

4                         And the experience we've heard from  
5           students is that a lot of them are working  
6           two jobs. Students that I taught this  
7           semester working two jobs just to pay their  
8           rent and pay their tuition.

9                         So when we say three-fourths graduate  
10          debt-free, it feels like it's a little  
11          disingenuous. And we need to be doing a lot  
12          more to make sure that we're fully supporting  
13          all of the needs of students and giving them  
14          an environment, both in the classroom and  
15          outside the classroom, where they can  
16          actually survive and thrive.

17                        And I don't think we're doing that  
18          right now. That's based on my own  
19          observations, the testimony we heard at the  
20          hearings in the fall that Senator Stavisky  
21          led, and my ongoing conversations with  
22          students.

23                        And so I too am very disappointed with  
24          the investments we're making in this budget,

1 or propose to make in this budget, that  
2 really goes to help students. And I'm very  
3 concerned about that.

4 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So thank you  
5 for your concern.

6 And I've always said, since my  
7 experience at Queens College and previously  
8 at Hunter, where I was on the faculty, that  
9 if we had instituted a \$5 alumni gift from  
10 all couples that met at CUNY, maybe, you  
11 know, some of this fiscal situation would  
12 have been addressed, because we have so many  
13 couples that met either at the campuses or  
14 between campuses. So great to have your  
15 story about your parents, and also your  
16 commitment to CUNY.

17 You talked about the needs of our  
18 students, and that's one of the things that  
19 we take very seriously. And it's very dear  
20 to the heart -- my heart, our presidents  
21 team. That is why on areas like food  
22 insecurity we've gone out there and secured  
23 funding for this pilot program with the City  
24 Council to be able to award food vouchers to

1           our students. We're beginning with a  
2           thousand students, and we're going to see how  
3           that has an impact on retention and  
4           graduation, and hopefully be able to expand  
5           it.

6                     The investment in lowering the cost of  
7           books -- if you have to spend less on books,  
8           that's more money that you have to be able to  
9           spend on other things. And that's I think a  
10          significant investment.

11                    The investment in cutting down the  
12          transportation costs, going back to the  
13          numbers that I provided Assemblywoman Hyndman  
14          in her question. So I think that --

15                    SENATOR GOUNARDES: Just to respond  
16          there, you know, if we weren't raising  
17          tuition and if we weren't charging students  
18          fees for mental health services, if we  
19          weren't doing all these things, they could  
20          afford transportation, they can afford room  
21          and board, they could afford their rent, they  
22          can afford to buy themselves a meal.

23                    I think we need to shift the paradigm  
24          of how we're thinking about funding higher

1 education. All these programs are great and  
2 we're spending a lot of money on them, but we  
3 can do more to make the costs lower for  
4 students on the education front and then find  
5 other ways to help them outside of that. I  
6 think we need to think very carefully and  
7 smartly about how we need to do this in the  
8 future, because it's not working, I guess is  
9 my overall point.

10 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Thank you.

11 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you,  
12 Senate.

13 Assembly?

14 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We go now for a  
15 second round to Assemblywoman Glick.

16 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Thank you.

17 You must have sort of an overall view  
18 of the capital needs -- not year to year, but  
19 at some point I'd like to understand what  
20 your long-range projection is so we can have  
21 a -- you know, we've -- both houses have  
22 supported five-year capital plans. They  
23 aren't always embraced, the bill gets vetoed.  
24 So we'd like to know what the target is

1 overall.

2 Have you or the presidents been  
3 directed to increase your outreach for  
4 philanthropy? Do you have a target that you  
5 would like to hit in order to -- obviously  
6 now you have a recommended, suggested in the  
7 budget, a match. So already you're being  
8 told you have to go out and raise money in  
9 order to get some of the capital. That's  
10 public. We want to understand if there's  
11 been this suggestion for some time or if  
12 there's some target that the trustees would  
13 like you to hit that even might exceed what  
14 is in the Governor's budget.

15 And you have the ASAP program. It's  
16 wonderful. What is the equivalent in the  
17 four-year schools? Because clearly you have  
18 students who come in, they're doing well --  
19 they may have some sort of family crisis,  
20 illness, what have you, and they start to  
21 struggle. Do you have a mechanism for  
22 identifying them? And then do you have a  
23 plan or a program in place that replicates  
24 ASAP, but for the four-year schools? I think

1           there is something, it's just the name is  
2           escaping me.

3                        CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Yes. ACE.

4                        ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: ACE, okay. If  
5           we could know a little bit more about how  
6           many students are getting supported in ACE,  
7           what's the -- how successful is it in the  
8           four years as compared to the ASAP program?  
9           So how big is it, how many have graduated,  
10          and how many students are being assisted?

11                      CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Okay.

12                      ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Here in the  
13          Capital Region there's something called  
14          Universal Access. It's a combination of  
15          money that's been funded by some of the  
16          corporations, and SUNY Albany throws money  
17          in. And it -- on your ID card it's in -- you  
18          know, it's encoded and you can take a bus  
19          or -- it's covered.

20                      The city has put out a new sort of  
21          low-income half-fare program. How many  
22          students are eligible for that? Do they know  
23          about it? If this is something that you're  
24          looking for additional money for One Stop, I

1           assume, is --

2                   CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Single Stop.

3                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Single Stop.

4           And so is this one of those things that  
5           students are assisted in? I assume you have  
6           to apply for it. Everything has to be  
7           applied for. So you have to know about it in  
8           order to benefit. That's okay. So is this  
9           one of those things that students might be  
10          able to access?

11                   CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So let me take  
12          your questions in order. You're making  
13          reference to the Fair Fares program. CUNY  
14          was one of the target populations in the  
15          initial rollout. In that initial rollout,  
16          already 12,000 students already signed up for  
17          a discount MetroCard. Now the city is going  
18          out citywide, and it's based on income  
19          eligibility. That's a city program.

20                   So we assume that thousands of CUNY  
21          students will be able to benefit from that  
22          program, and we've been out there  
23          publicizing, you know, working with the city  
24          in letting our students know that they need

1 to take advantage of this program because it  
2 will be a significant benefit for them.

3 In the community colleges where we  
4 have your Single Stop, which you made a  
5 reference to, that is one place that we've  
6 been partnering, getting the message out to  
7 get the students to know about all these  
8 programs.

9 The connection of students to  
10 programs -- you made a reference that  
11 students need to know, that they need to  
12 apply, they need to know the rules -- is one  
13 of the reasons why in our budget request we  
14 asked for additional resources to be able to  
15 support staff that can connect students to  
16 all those opportunities and can serve as  
17 liaisons with the city agencies that provide  
18 the rulings.

19 I'll send you the information on ACE.  
20 ACE is a pilot program, we've done it for  
21 three years now at John Jay. We just began a  
22 cohort at Lehman. We can provide you with  
23 the numbers. The initial numbers are very,  
24 very promising. Modeled after ASAP. We --

1 in the same way that we built ASAP, we want  
2 to do that, test it, research, make sure that  
3 we're getting it right.

4 To your question of philanthropy, all  
5 the presidents are expected to fundraise.  
6 And actually the ACE version at Lehman got a  
7 philanthropic gift to be able to expand the  
8 number of students. Based on the prestige of  
9 ASAP, they said they want to invest in  
10 Lehman, so the president got a gift. Provost  
11 Cruz used to be the president at Lehman  
12 before I asked him to join us.

13 So we can send you more information.  
14 It's extremely promising. I've been charging  
15 the committees that are looking for  
16 presidents that an ability to fundraise is  
17 one of the criteria they need to have. It's  
18 an important thing. And the Governor's  
19 two-to-one matching program allows us to go  
20 to potential funders and have them further  
21 incentivized to give because their dollar is  
22 going an extra mile.

23 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Thank you.

24 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

1                   We go to the Senate now.

2                   CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

3                   Senator Ken LaValle.

4                   SENATOR LaVALLE: Thank you.

5                   Senator Stavisky told us about her  
6 concerns for students being in crumbling  
7 facilities. Senators Liu, Jackson and  
8 Gounardes told us of their concern for  
9 student costs going up, lack of funding.  
10 Now, Chancellor, we all have personalities  
11 and we show and express ourselves in  
12 different ways. I didn't get a sense -- I  
13 mean, students being in crumbling facilities?  
14 I would get a sense that you would be  
15 outraged by that.

16                   CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Well, Senator,  
17 first I want to thank you for your years of  
18 service in the Senate and in higher ed. And  
19 all of us who are part of public higher ed  
20 owe you a big debt of gratitude for your  
21 commitment and your service.

22                   To your question, I served 10 years as  
23 a college president and 10 before as a  
24 faculty member. Right? So I've been in the

1 buildings at Hunter, at Hostos and at Queens.  
2 I think my colleagues both at Queens and at  
3 Hostos will tell you that as president I was  
4 always very attentive to all our  
5 infrastructure needs to make sure that if  
6 there were issues about, you know, bathrooms  
7 that were not ready, you know, buildings that  
8 needed repairs, that they were looked after  
9 quickly and in a way that showed respect for  
10 the students.

11 We're doing the same thing at the City  
12 University of New York. We're trying to  
13 stretch every dollar that we get. We're  
14 trying to get additional dollars to be able  
15 to provide the facilities that our students  
16 deserve.

17 So I am clearly, clearly disturbed  
18 when I hear comments about things in our  
19 facilities that do not match the -- the  
20 respect that our students deserve. My mom  
21 and my dad in Puerto Rico are products of a  
22 public university. My dad became an  
23 engineer. I wouldn't be standing in front of  
24 you if it was not that that door of

1 opportunity was open for them, so I know what  
2 that means. And when I see our students, I  
3 see them. So I want for them the same kind  
4 of infrastructure that students at private  
5 campuses have.

6 SENATOR LaVALLE: You have requested a  
7 \$120 a year health and student fee. What is  
8 a student going to get for that?

9 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So thank you  
10 for your question.

11 First let me say that that will be the  
12 first fee that the City University of  
13 New York has added since 2002. Right? So  
14 when we think about tuition increases, when  
15 we think about increasing fees, these are  
16 things that we are thoughtful of when we do  
17 them because we want to be sensitive to our  
18 student population.

19 We have heard about needs of  
20 additional mental health counselors. We have  
21 heard about needs about expansion of hours in  
22 our wellness clinics. We have heard about  
23 additional support for students that have  
24 food and housing insecurity.

1           The proposed fee will work in this  
2 way. We'll take one-third of the funding  
3 from the fee, the central office, and we will  
4 tell the campuses to invest it directly and  
5 immediately in adding mental health  
6 counselors and in adding personnel so that  
7 they can help the students -- for example, if  
8 you're food insecure, to be able to apply for  
9 SNAP. If you have issues with housing, to be  
10 able to identify -- we need people on the  
11 ground to be able to connect the students to  
12 do that.

13           So the first third of that fee will  
14 begin to transform by providing, directly,  
15 mental health counselors and other staff to  
16 the campuses.

17           The other two-thirds will work in the  
18 same way that the tech fee works now, which  
19 means that it will go to a committee on the  
20 campus, a committee with student voices,  
21 faculty voices, and they will determine what  
22 campus needs they have. It won't be the  
23 central office. It will be, in each campus,  
24 how do we supplement, what are some of the

1 priorities that students have. Right?  
2 Because the fee will be coming from the  
3 students. So this will be a very direct way.

4 We're also, you know, going to  
5 request -- we're asking the city and state  
6 for additional funding in the area of  
7 wellness, right? So it's a comprehensive  
8 way.

9 But the fee will directly go to  
10 address some of these things we've been  
11 hearing about in a very direct way, with  
12 two-thirds of the funding going to the  
13 campuses with student input into how the  
14 funds get to be spent.

15 SENATOR LaVALLE: I'm glad to hear  
16 mental health was highlighted by you --  
17 critical in today's world on our campuses.

18 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: We're in  
19 agreement. Thank you.

20 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.  
21 Assembly?

22 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Nope, we're  
23 done.

24 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Oh, the

1 Assembly's done.

2 So Senator Jim Seward.

3 SENATOR SEWARD: Thank you, Madam  
4 Chair.

5 And Chancellor, welcome.

6 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Thank you.

7 SENATOR SEWARD: I wanted to return to  
8 the discussion on tuition-free students at  
9 CUNY. You mentioned that two out of three  
10 students are tuition-free?

11 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: That's correct,  
12 sir.

13 SENATOR SEWARD: Does that mean that  
14 with the tuition increases that we've seen as  
15 well as projected for the next four years,  
16 does that mean that those increases in  
17 tuition are falling onto that third student?

18 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So about  
19 70 percent of our students pay full tuition.  
20 And so again, I want to remind you that the  
21 proposed authority in our history at CUNY --  
22 for example, we had it for the past four or  
23 five years -- every year we determine whether  
24 we want to be to able to -- we want to



1 another question too, in our budget request  
2 we propose that -- just sort of a partial  
3 movement of restoring the TAP gap. The  
4 amount that we put in the budget request was  
5 to begin with 9 million.

6 You know, we know that 86, which is  
7 the total predicted for next year, is a large  
8 number. We also know that you have many  
9 individuals coming to you with different  
10 requests, right, so we want to be judicious  
11 in that. But we hope that over time we're  
12 able to sort of fill that TAP gap, yes.

13 SENATOR SEWARD: Okay. Getting back  
14 to the capital program and that issue, do you  
15 maintain a backlog of projects that are  
16 needed in regard to the facility condition  
17 index, which measures the current conditions  
18 of facilities requiring capital investment?  
19 Can you give us some idea of what that  
20 backlog is in your system?

21 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So I don't know  
22 the number offhand, but we'll be happy to  
23 provide that to your office.

24 SENATOR SEWARD: Can you share with us

1           what your budget request for capital projects  
2           and strategic initiatives were this year?

3                   CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: I'm going to  
4           defer to our CFO, who knows those numbers a  
5           little better than I do.

6                   CUNY CFO SAPIENZA: Senator, this is  
7           our capital project request book  
8           (indicating). I hope all of you have it. If  
9           you don't, we can certainly make sure we can  
10          provide it to you. It's 185 pages, very  
11          comprehensive. There's capital projects in  
12          here for every single campus that are fully  
13          detailed.

14                   In our request for the next five-year  
15          plan, we are seeking \$5.2 billion: 3.8 for  
16          the senior colleges, 1.4 for the junior  
17          colleges.

18                   SENATOR SEWARD: Well, if it was up to  
19          the Legislature, we would have a five-year  
20          plan for both CUNY and SUNY.

21                   I just wanted to shift gears quickly  
22          to the community colleges in your system.  
23          Are you experiencing enrollment declines?

24                   CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: We have. And I

1 think that it is something that -- you know,  
2 I served five years as a community college  
3 president at Hostos from 2009 to '14.

4 First, it is not atypical at a time  
5 when the unemployment numbers are low and the  
6 economy is perceived to be better, the  
7 enrollment numbers in higher ed, but  
8 particularly in community colleges, are sort  
9 of countercyclical in that regard.

10 So we have seen -- we have been able,  
11 in the past year or so, to sort of put some  
12 of the brakes on that decline, but the  
13 numbers have been going down for the past  
14 two, three years.

15 SENATOR FELDER: Even in declining  
16 enrollment, the community colleges, both CUNY  
17 and SUNY, do a tremendous job in terms of  
18 workforce training and development.

19 And would you anticipate an  
20 increase -- the need to increase community  
21 college tuition based on the enrollment  
22 levels of today?

23 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So we are  
24 asking for, first, additional support. In

1           this process in the past, the increase to the  
2           base aid I think is a continuing component,  
3           and we look forward to working with you to be  
4           able to restore that.

5                     We did, in this year, after four years  
6           of not having any increase in our community  
7           college, ask for an increase. That increase  
8           would still be below the maximum TAP award.  
9           So we anticipate, you know, 90 percent of our  
10          students in the community colleges not being  
11          affected in terms of having to pay  
12          out-of-pocket for that increase.

13                    And again, as someone who served five  
14          years in a community college, I also concur  
15          with you about how important they are as a  
16          door of opportunity, as a gateway, and also  
17          as a key partner to the business community in  
18          the workforce area.

19                    SENATOR SEWARD: Thank you.

20                    CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Thank you.

21                    CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

22                    I'm going to take my questions and  
23          then we'll let Toby Stavisky close for the  
24          Senate.

1                   So tuition goes up each year, but  
2                   you're reporting that students aren't  
3                   finishing school with debt. So are we seeing  
4                   an impact on their retention and how many  
5                   years it takes them to finish schools if in  
6                   fact they're still completing school without  
7                   debt?

8                   CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So thank you  
9                   for your question. And obviously we're very  
10                  proud of the success we've had over the last  
11                  couple of years in increasing both our  
12                  graduation rates and our retention rates.  
13                  It's been really a remarkable story, both at  
14                  the community colleges and the four-year  
15                  colleges, of advancing an agenda of student  
16                  success, making sure that students keep  
17                  academic momentum, that they take as many  
18                  credits that they possibly can, that they  
19                  stay on track, that we provide support for  
20                  them.

21                  In preparation of the budget, we  
22                  actually also looked at the past and we  
23                  looked at the students that were paying  
24                  out-of-pocket, and we didn't find a direct

1 correlation between students that were paying  
2 the tuition increases and students that were  
3 stopping out or not graduating. Right? So  
4 we're very thoughtful in our analysis to do  
5 that request.

6 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: So we know that  
7 you've gotten your -- well, we don't know for  
8 sure, but we think you have resolved your  
9 adjunct situation for a while, that there is  
10 capital money for the first time in a while.

11 What if you didn't do an increase in  
12 the next couple of years? What would be the  
13 impact on your university?

14 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So the -- let  
15 me just make a reference to the adjunct issue  
16 because it's something that I know is of  
17 interest to many of you, and it's a big  
18 concern of mine, and that's why we moved  
19 aggressively at the beginning of my tenure to  
20 work with the PSC to be able to bring the  
21 contract to resolution and, in that, provide  
22 a historic increase to the adjuncts.

23 Putting on my hat as a former college  
24 president, right, when we moved to the point

1           where the adjuncts at the lowest rate of  
2           compensation receive \$5500 as their salary --  
3           when you do the math, you would not be too  
4           far away of what the salary would be for a  
5           full-time lecturer. Right?

6                        So it is my hope and it was part of  
7           the aspiration of this contract that you  
8           begin to see a move of having the campuses,  
9           for example, hire more full-time faculty --  
10          the full-time lecturers are part of the  
11          full-time faculty -- in a way that advances  
12          student success and makes us to be less  
13          dependent on adjuncts.

14                       So the contract was both a way to do  
15          justice to the adjuncts in terms of payment  
16          but also part of our longer-term strategy to  
17          sort of bring down the reliance on the number  
18          of adjuncts and continue to increase the  
19          number of full-time faculty that we have.

20                       As I mentioned before, every year we  
21          do an analysis of where our fiscal needs are  
22          and what we would need to be able to get  
23          there. And in the past there's been times in  
24          which we have decided to go ahead with

1           tuition increases; there have been times when  
2           we have decided not to do that.

3                     The tuition revenue this year that we  
4           get at the senior colleges is 36 million.  
5           Right? So if you can project that moving  
6           forward, there would be a comfortable amount  
7           in the outlying years that we have to be able  
8           to address to be able to think about  
9           different forms of tuition increases or not.

10                    CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: So you don't  
11           necessarily have to know this now, but I'm  
12           very interested in you getting back to us.  
13           You know how many students came in on  
14           Excelsior scholarship so far. It wasn't that  
15           many.

16                    If we jump 125 to 135 to 150 in three  
17           years, can you project for us, one, how many  
18           additional students that will bring in versus  
19           how many students who already were coming and  
20           graduating on time will now just get full  
21           freight, so to speak, for college?

22                    And then I'm assuming that you, CUNY,  
23           have to pick up that cost.

24                    CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: In the TAP gap,

1           you mean?

2                   CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER:  So if another 300  
3           students come in with Excelsior at 125 up,  
4           they've not been eligible for TAP at all up  
5           until now, so they're going to get  
6           100 percent of TAP.  So is that billed  
7           against your colleges, as opposed to the  
8           state comes up with that money separately?

9                   CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ:  So we have now  
10          about 4500 students in CUNY that benefit from  
11          the Excelsior program.  And our estimate is  
12          about another \$1,400 when the eligibility  
13          moves to the \$150,000 in household income.  I  
14          have to make sure I get those numbers right.

15                   The 400,000 is an estimate based on  
16          the number of students currently that their  
17          families make that amount.  I think it's fair  
18          to estimate that there might be another  
19          number of students who now are not thinking  
20          of CUNY as an option, right, who might  
21          consider CUNY as an option as a result of  
22          Excelsior, who are in that bandwidth that now  
23          are deciding to go elsewhere.  And making a  
24          projection of that is really tricky.

1                   So the number that we share with you  
2                   is a number based on the number of students  
3                   that we do have now that fit that household  
4                   income data.

5                   CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: So I'm from  
6                   Manhattan, so whenever anybody talks about  
7                   building anything, we're talking air rights.

8                   Are we talking that you can count air  
9                   rights against the half that you have to come  
10                  up with to get the matching money from the  
11                  state?

12                  CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: That if you  
13                  count air rights --

14                  CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Against -- so you  
15                  have this two-to-one match assignment for the  
16                  capital money. So in Manhattan, almost  
17                  anything that gets built as a public  
18                  building, a public amenity, has some piece of  
19                  an air-rights deal tied into it. Is it the  
20                  assumption that that's what you were going to  
21                  be working with and that the sale of those  
22                  air rights will count towards the matching  
23                  funds you have to come up with?

24                  CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: That -- I mean,



1 the new team that we have in the office --  
2 and I think he's in the audience -- Allen  
3 Lew, our new senior vice chancellor for  
4 facilities and planning. One of the tasks  
5 that he has -- and he is a City College alum  
6 who decided to come back after being the city  
7 manager in D.C. and running all the public  
8 infrastructure programs in D.C.

9 So he's been charged to begin to look  
10 at situations like that to see if we can  
11 expedite solutions to be able to advance the  
12 situation for the nursing students at Hunter  
13 and some of the other capital needs that we  
14 have in Hunter and other parts of the city.  
15 So it is one of his first assignments as our  
16 new senior vice chancellor for facilities and  
17 planning.

18 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: And how many  
19 students live in my district? I'm feeling a  
20 little hurt.

21 (Laughter.)

22 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: No, no, no, no,  
23 we have that.

24 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Twenty-eight.

1 Senate District 28.

2 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: No, no, I know.

3 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: It's okay, I  
4 wasn't really trying to put you on the spot.

5 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: No, no, no,  
6 this is -- I want to make sure that -- 2,129.  
7 So I want to make sure that you feel the love  
8 too.

9 (Laughter.)

10 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

11 Toby Stavisky to close.

12 SENATOR STAVISKY: I'm not going to  
13 ask you that question. Or maybe I will.

14 Since the Governor's -- really for the  
15 past year and a quarter that I've been chair  
16 of the Higher Ed Committee, I've been meeting  
17 with everybody, all aspects of the education  
18 community. And the one theme that I hear, in  
19 addition to the underfunding of public higher  
20 education, is the TAP gap. And I hear it  
21 from the students, but I hear it from the  
22 faculty and I hear it from constituents.

23 How do you propose we deal with the  
24 TAP gap?

1                   CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: So thank you,  
2                   Senator, and --

3                   SENATOR STAVISKY: You've thanked me  
4                   for every question I've asked.

5                   CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: To be an  
6                   equal-opportunity chancellor, thank you on  
7                   behalf of the 11,268 CUNY students that live  
8                   in your district. And which used to be --

9                   SENATOR STAVISKY: You mean CUNY  
10                  students --

11                  CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: CUNY students  
12                  in your district, yes.

13                  The TAP gap is a concern. If you look  
14                  at our budget request, it is one of the  
15                  things that we addressed. And we propose a  
16                  scale way to sort of get back to restore that  
17                  number, which would be projected at  
18                  \$86 million next year. Our request was  
19                  \$9 million to begin.

20                  And again, that is something which,  
21                  you know, we recognize that presents a sort  
22                  of a structural issue. And we look forward  
23                  to working with all of you in trying to  
24                  address that.

1                   SENATOR STAVISKY: We brought up the  
2                   issue of students learning in temporary  
3                   facilities, whether they be trailers or  
4                   prefab buildings or whatever. Can you give  
5                   us a number -- I'm sure you don't have it at  
6                   hand -- how many classes are being taught or  
7                   how many students are being taught in these  
8                   temporary structures?

9                   Because the testimony from -- I think  
10                  it was the student leaders, I think it was  
11                  Medgar Evers, if I'm not mistaken, at the  
12                  December 16th hearing, was very compelling.

13                 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: And I received  
14                 your letter after the hearing. Thank you.  
15                 And we're getting the information for that.  
16                 And I can get you that information.

17                 SENATOR STAVISKY: And lastly, it was  
18                 discussed a little this afternoon the issues  
19                 concerning the mental health fee that is  
20                 being charged the students. Which I must  
21                 tell you, it seems to me this is an issue  
22                 that should be borne by the college, not by  
23                 the recipients of the services. And that's  
24                 really what's happening.

1                   And I think the students themselves  
2                   throughout the hearings, whether it be in  
3                   Buffalo from SUNY students, in Syracuse, we  
4                   went to New Paltz, we went to Brooklyn  
5                   College, Nassau Community College, 250  
6                   Broadway. And mental health issues have been  
7                   a rising concern, particularly in today's day  
8                   and age. And I really urge you to try to  
9                   resolve that issue without charging the  
10                  students for the fee.

11                  And lastly, along those lines, we had  
12                  a pilot project where students were able to  
13                  work with other students, graduate students  
14                  in psychology were able to -- I think it was  
15                  teleconferencing, and I think they used  
16                  Upstate Medical School students to try to  
17                  provide services, really a listening device,  
18                  I guess, for students with mental health  
19                  issues. And I think this is an issue that  
20                  calls for creative solutions.

21                  And I thank you, and I thank the  
22                  chairs.

23                  CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

24                  Assembly.

1                   CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Just to close,  
2                   I would be remiss if I didn't say if it  
3                   wasn't for Brooklyn College, I probably  
4                   wouldn't be here. Both my parents were  
5                   graduates at a time when obviously it was --  
6                   tuition was free.

7                   And I think some of those buildings  
8                   they took classes in are still there and  
9                   probably need some of this capital  
10                  improvement. So I appreciate your work  
11                  there.

12                  A question about Brooklyn College.  
13                  There's a program, Lifelong Learning, which  
14                  has allowed seniors to come and take classes,  
15                  really courses. It's not -- they run their  
16                  own courses, lectures. And it was very  
17                  popular. They lost their space at Brooklyn  
18                  College. So perhaps we can work together to  
19                  find a way for them to have some space.

20                  CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: What is the  
21                  name of the program?

22                  CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: It's called  
23                  Brooklyn Lifelong Learning.

24                  CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Thank you.

1                   CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: So it was local  
2 people would come and teach a program, teach  
3 a class. They were using the space on the  
4 campus, and it was very worthwhile.

5                   And I know you didn't tell me the  
6 numbers of how many students I have, but I  
7 know I have some of the highest numbers of  
8 CUNY students in Brooklyn.

9                   CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Four thousand  
10 two hundred and seventy-seven.

11                  CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: And they are  
12 very good students. And I have -- I think  
13 most of my staff actually are CUNY graduates,  
14 for either undergraduate or actually with  
15 master's degrees. So I know the kind of  
16 quality of learning that goes on over the  
17 years at CUNY. And obviously we're committed  
18 to make sure that continues for the next  
19 generation of students.

20                  Thank you for being here.

21                  CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Thank you for  
22 your support. I'll look at the information  
23 about that program and get back to you. And  
24 thank you also for being such a great higher

1 ed ally over the years.

2 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

3 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

4 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: So that's it.

5 We're finished with questions. And to the  
6 extent that there are any follow-ups, we'll  
7 share them with all the members.

8 CHANCELLOR RODRÍGUEZ: Thank you.

9 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Our next  
10 witness, as people are leaving, is going to  
11 be the New York State Education Department's  
12 Interim Commissioner, Shannon Tahoe.

13 (Pause.)

14 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Commissioner,  
15 why don't you begin. Thank you.

16 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: Good  
17 afternoon, Chairs Krueger, Weinstein,  
18 Stavisky and Glick and members of the Senate  
19 and Assembly here today. My name is Shannon  
20 Tahoe, and I am the Interim Commissioner of  
21 Education.

22 I am joined today at the table by  
23 Senior Deputy Commissioner for P-20 John  
24 D'Agati, Chief Financial Officer Phyllis

1 Morris, Deputy Commissioner for the Office of  
2 the Professions Doug Lentivech, and Deputy  
3 Commissioner for the Office of Adult Career  
4 and Continuing Education Services Kevin  
5 Smith.

6 You have my full testimony before you.

7 Before I begin, I also want to welcome  
8 members of the Board of Regents who are in  
9 the audience today, including Chancellor  
10 Rosa, Regent Cashin, and Regent Mead.

11 The Regents' priorities in higher  
12 education are laser-focused on equity and  
13 access to postsecondary education  
14 opportunities, particularly for our  
15 underrepresented students. We know from  
16 multiple indicators college completion leads  
17 to better employment opportunities and higher  
18 income.

19 In order to support this critical  
20 priority of increasing equity and access, as  
21 you can see on slides 3 through 7, the  
22 Regents recommend an increase of \$10 million  
23 for our Higher Education Opportunity  
24 Programs. These programs provide access to

1 postsecondary education for students who are  
2 at the highest risk of either not graduating  
3 from high school, not attending college, or  
4 not completing a degree.

5 We were pleased to see that the  
6 Executive Budget proposal included last  
7 year's additional funding for these programs  
8 in this year's proposed amount. Over 39,000  
9 students are served by one of these programs.  
10 We would reach even more students across the  
11 state with these additional recommended  
12 investments.

13 Under our CSTEP and STEP programs, for  
14 example, we would provide students with  
15 opportunities to participate in STEM-based  
16 research, internships or exploratory career  
17 opportunities at area facilities.

18 We appreciate the strong support you  
19 have demonstrated for our Opportunity  
20 Programs. These programs work, and your  
21 support and funding has made a difference.

22 Another Regents priority proposal  
23 aimed at increasing equity and access,  
24 described on Slide 8, is to enhance supports

1 and services for postsecondary success of the  
2 over 75,000 individuals with disabilities  
3 attending New York State institutions of  
4 higher education.

5 The Regents are requesting a  
6 \$15 million grant program that would be  
7 designed to supplement funding for support  
8 and accommodations of individuals with  
9 disabilities, support summer college  
10 preparation programs to assist individuals  
11 with disabilities with the transition to  
12 college, provide full- and part-time college  
13 faculty and staff with disability training,  
14 and improve the identification process of  
15 individuals with disabilities and enhanced  
16 data collection capabilities.

17 Another priority related to ensuring  
18 equity and access in higher education is on  
19 page 9, the Readers Aid Program, which  
20 provides funding to institutions of higher  
21 education on behalf of students who are  
22 blind, deaf, deaf-blind or hard of hearing.

23 Thanks to your support, in 2017 the  
24 Legislature and Executive provided an

1           increase in the amount of the maximum  
2           reimbursement rate per student and allowed  
3           for the purchase of assistive technology.  
4           Last year over 200 students from 28 colleges  
5           and the universities received Readers Aid  
6           funding.

7                         Unfortunately, the current annual  
8           appropriation for this program is  
9           insufficient to meet the needs of the  
10          increased number of eligible students. That  
11          is why the Regents are requesting a total of  
12          \$1 million to serve approximately  
13          400 students per year. We need to start this  
14          critical conversation of how, as a state, we  
15          can better support individuals with  
16          disabilities to be successful in college.

17                        Continuing with our focus on equity  
18          and access, one of the top Regents priorities  
19          is funding programs that support teacher  
20          diversity in our classrooms. This means  
21          ensuring access to higher education as well  
22          as recruiting, preparing and supporting  
23          students in teacher and leader preparation  
24          programs and thereafter.

1                    Aligned with the department's December  
2                    2019 Educator Diversity Report, on Slides 10  
3                    and 11 we emphasize the need for our teaching  
4                    workforce to be as diverse as our student  
5                    population. Our Teacher Opportunity Corps II  
6                    program has been funded by the My Brother's  
7                    Keeper initiative, and we want to thank all  
8                    of you again, especially Speaker Heastie.

9                    We are asking for \$3 million in new  
10                    funding to establish a separately  
11                    appropriated Teacher Opportunity Corps II  
12                    program to increase the number of certified  
13                    educators of color, who are underrepresented  
14                    and underserved in the teaching profession.  
15                    This program also aims to better prepare  
16                    teachers to address the learning needs of  
17                    students in high-need districts and to become  
18                    culturally responsive and sustaining  
19                    educators.

20                    To address teacher diversity needs,  
21                    the Board of Regents also recommends that  
22                    \$2.5 million in funding be provided to create  
23                    innovative birth to Grade 3 teacher  
24                    preparation programs and birth to Grade 12

1 teacher leader programs. These programs  
2 would better serve as transformational models  
3 through collaborations between institutions  
4 of higher education, school districts,  
5 community-based organizations, and health and  
6 mental health systems. This funding would  
7 provide opportunities for approximately  
8 240 individuals from New York State  
9 historically underrepresented and underserved  
10 populations to become teachers and leaders.

11 Finally, in order to eliminate  
12 potential barriers and to promote teacher  
13 diversity and encourage more candidates to  
14 join the teaching profession, the Regents  
15 have prioritized, on Slide 12, \$1.2 million  
16 in new funding to provide more fee-waiver  
17 vouchers to assist economically disadvantaged  
18 students to pay for their certification  
19 exams.

20 As you negotiate this budget, please  
21 remember that our workforce and the workforce  
22 pipeline are the state's most important  
23 investment. A state-of-the-art workforce  
24 pipeline does not depend only on traditional

1 college pathways. Ensuring equity and access  
2 to other successful pathways for our  
3 out-of-school youth and adults is also a  
4 priority of the Board of Regents.

5 As you can see on Slide 13, the  
6 Regents are requesting a \$3 million  
7 investment in Bridge Programs to enable  
8 out-of-school youth and adults to obtain  
9 essential basic skills, a high school  
10 equivalency diploma, industry-recognized  
11 credentials, and preparation for  
12 postsecondary study and careers.

13 The programs would consist of  
14 partnerships between an adult education  
15 program and colleges or training providers of  
16 demonstrated effectiveness. This proposal  
17 could pilot up to 10 Bridge Programs across  
18 New York State.

19 Ensuring public health and safety of  
20 New Yorkers and enhancing customer service in  
21 our Office of Professions are the final  
22 priority areas of the Board of Regents that I  
23 would like to highlight today. On Slides 14  
24 through 18, we provide you with updates on

1 the efforts of the Office of Professions as  
2 our work and responsibilities continue to  
3 grow in this area.

4 In the last two years, the Office of  
5 Professions has seen a 10 percent increase in  
6 the number of new licenses issued. Notably,  
7 this included approximately 6,000 additional  
8 applicants from non-registered programs whose  
9 education must be individually reviewed,  
10 increasing this workload by 50 percent.

11 These increased responsibilities and  
12 complex reviews, coupled with challenges in  
13 hiring, training and retaining qualified  
14 staff to replace positions lost due to  
15 retirement, promotion and previous budget  
16 constraints, have made it challenging to  
17 timely meet the growing demands placed on  
18 this office.

19 I want to bring particular attention  
20 to this office's modernization and electronic  
21 licensing activities on Slides 17 and 18,  
22 which, when fully implemented, will help to  
23 improve cycle times in both licensure and  
24 discipline.

1           In 2009, the Legislature and Executive  
2           approved a 15 percent registration fee  
3           increase so that we could replace a  
4           30-year-old COBOL-based licensing system and  
5           enhance our customer service. We have begun  
6           that work and are using these funds to  
7           develop user-friendly online applications in  
8           nearly 50 professions, implement a more  
9           robust call center, and begin the complex  
10          work to replace our antiquated mainframe  
11          system.

12           We ask for your support in the  
13          Executive Budget proposal to allow us to use  
14          \$25.4 million in capital spending authority  
15          to continue these efforts.

16           Finally, on Slide 21, we ask the  
17          Legislature to pass and the Governor to enact  
18          the enhanced disciplinary authority bill, to  
19          ensure we can protect patients and consumers  
20          in a timely manner while still maintaining  
21          important due process protections.

22           This bill would provide the department  
23          with similar authority already granted to the  
24          Department of Health's OPMC to authorize the

1 commissioner or his or her designee to order  
2 a temporary suspension of practice privileges  
3 when there is an imminent danger to public  
4 health or safety, require all licensed  
5 professionals to report moral character  
6 issues upon application for licensure, and  
7 require that all licensed professionals  
8 report to SED any record of conviction of a  
9 crime in a timely manner.

10 Before I take your questions, we want  
11 to thank you all for the opportunity to  
12 discuss our priorities and for your support  
13 last year. We look forward to working with  
14 you again on our shared goals and in this  
15 important discussion.

16 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

17 We go to Deborah Glick.

18 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: First of all,  
19 thank you very much for your very  
20 comprehensive presentation. Lots of the  
21 questions that one might ask -- how many  
22 programs, how many students -- you have in  
23 there, as well as the additional requests  
24 that you need.

1 Overall, since the Opportunity  
2 Programs you've asked for additional  
3 resources in a number of these areas. And  
4 you may not have this immediately, but how  
5 many slots are you short in these different  
6 areas? You're asking for a certain amount of  
7 money so you can add -- I don't know if it's  
8 students or programs, so --

9 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: Sure. So  
10 we have four Higher Education Opportunity  
11 Programs. First is our Liberty Partnerships  
12 Program. We're requesting a \$2 million  
13 increase to provide projects with the  
14 opportunity to serve an additional 1300  
15 students for Liberty Partnerships.

16 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Okay. I see  
17 that's down in the -- thank you.

18 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: Yes.

19 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: The student ed  
20 programs, some years ago linked to the  
21 measuring teachers by student test scores --  
22 one of the things that got slipped in was the  
23 requirement that in order to get into a  
24 master's program in order to be a teacher,

1           you needed a 3.0. We put in a bill to  
2           eliminate that because, you know, we think  
3           that there probably are people with a 3.2 who  
4           really can communicate information to  
5           students. But somebody who may have taken a  
6           tough course early in their career in  
7           college, maybe they have a 2.8, but they are  
8           dynamic, they're engaging, they're  
9           motivating -- and yet they can't get into a  
10          program.

11                         Do you have any thoughts about whether  
12          there's going to be a teacher shortage, if we  
13          have a teacher shortage, if we are making it  
14          impossible for qualified students to get into  
15          these programs to address a teacher shortage?

16                         INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: I think  
17          this is one of the main priorities of the  
18          Board of Regents and the department for this  
19          coming year.

20                         I think teacher shortages is a major  
21          issue. I think it's a statewide issue. I  
22          also think it's a regional issue. We're  
23          seeing certain shortage areas at the state  
24          level that are common across like special ed

1 and bilingual. We also have individual areas  
2 in pockets of the state where they have  
3 individualized regional needs and regional  
4 shortages in certain subject and  
5 certification areas.

6 One of the things we're working on  
7 internally is talking to our higher education  
8 partners about ways in which they can  
9 communicate directly with school districts in  
10 their regional areas to say where are your  
11 demands, or where are your needs? Let us  
12 support you in these areas and try to work on  
13 creating teacher education pipelines for the  
14 shortages that exist in those regionalized  
15 areas. This is something the department is  
16 very committed to.

17 We're also engaging in a workgroup  
18 across the state, and the ECB is about to put  
19 out recommendations on the teacher shortage  
20 issue. We're looking at those  
21 recommendations and creating a statewide  
22 workgroup with all of our stakeholders to  
23 come up with solutions on specific statewide  
24 issues as well as how to resolve those

1 regional issues that are appearing throughout  
2 the state.

3 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: I think that  
4 there was some desire not to erode standards.  
5 I think the department sort of went to war a  
6 little bit, if you'll pardon the expression,  
7 over allowing charter schools to just certify  
8 their own teachers.

9 So do you see some sort of disconnect  
10 between this policy? Have you had outreach  
11 from campuses around the state complaining  
12 about this restriction on accepting students  
13 based on the 3.0?

14 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: Right.  
15 On the 3.0 specifically, I'll refer to John  
16 D'Agati, our deputy commissioner for P-20, on  
17 that.

18 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Good to see you  
19 back, John.

20 (Laughter.)

21 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER D'AGATI: Thank  
22 you, Assemblymember.

23 If I recall correctly, the 3.0  
24 provided -- it was put in place, but it also

1 provided an opportunity to -- if you had --  
2 it did provide flexibility in that if you had  
3 students who didn't quite meet that, you had  
4 like a 15 percent -- 15 percent of your  
5 admits did not have to meet that requirement.

6 So I have not -- recently I have not  
7 heard that as being a barrier to getting into  
8 graduate programs. I haven't -- nobody's  
9 reached out to me to say directly that that's  
10 causing people not to be able to get in.

11 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Okay. You have  
12 a lot of information here on the e-licensing.  
13 That -- there is some additional capital  
14 provided. What more will that do?

15 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: The  
16 \$25.4 million in additional spending  
17 authority, that's through fees we've already  
18 collected through our registration and  
19 licensure fees. It's just a spending.

20 That additional fee, we are looking to  
21 do a comprehensive OP modernization of our  
22 website, our application process. What we're  
23 looking to do is have an automated system  
24 wherein essentially applicants for any of our

1 over 50 licensed professions can go online,  
2 they can upload their different, varying  
3 educational documents, experience documents.  
4 And there would almost be -- the computer is  
5 going -- it's a system where it's going to be  
6 able to automatically, essentially, be able  
7 to tell whether or not they've met the  
8 licensure requirements in some of these  
9 cases, which will streamline our backlogs and  
10 our situations where we have, you know,  
11 significant delays in the licensure process.

12 We're also creating a comprehensive  
13 new call center and redoing our complete  
14 website modernization for the Office of  
15 Professions. So it would do all of those  
16 things.

17 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: I suspect that  
18 this will be an answer from Doug.

19 There are several proposals in the  
20 Executive Budget regarding changes to  
21 professions that would normally go through  
22 the Legislature. There was an article just  
23 last week, I think, in the New York Times,  
24 fairly extensively, about concerns that

1 pharmacists, particularly those who work for  
2 chains -- which in a lot of places are the  
3 only game in town -- are concerned about the  
4 metrics that are being used. They have to  
5 have X number of contacts with people, they  
6 have to produce X number of refills. Doctors  
7 are saying, I don't want to refill that  
8 prescription, and they're getting these calls  
9 from pharmacists who are required to make the  
10 calls.

11 And the proposals focused on pharmacy  
12 seem to expand the number of people who a  
13 pharmacist would have to supervise.

14 Are there any concerns that the  
15 department has about proceeding in the budget  
16 with proposals that -- we've hardly measured  
17 the changes we made with pharmacy techs in  
18 the last session. Do you have any concerns  
19 about we're moving too quickly on some of  
20 this?

21 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: Yes,  
22 Chair Glick. And I think that's -- thank you  
23 for bringing that up.

24 I think some of these proposals are

1 really included in the budget proposal which  
2 actually need more intensive thought. And we  
3 have some technical concerns with a lot of  
4 the Office of Professions bills that are  
5 currently embedded in the Executive proposal,  
6 and we would work with the Legislature on  
7 solutions to those problems.

8 But we do find that sometimes it's  
9 best to put it out of the budget  
10 conversation.

11 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: So you would  
12 recommend that the Legislature sort of say,  
13 you know, let's have this conversation  
14 post-budget and vet these.

15 Have you had any opportunity to review  
16 what we've already done in terms of pharmacy  
17 techs?

18 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: Yes, we  
19 have. Currently the pharmacy techs are  
20 limited to the Article 28 institutions, and  
21 the Executive proposal bill would expand that  
22 and allow registered pharm techs outside of  
23 the Article 28 facilities.

24 This is something that we're greatly

1           concerned with. We're just getting off the  
2           ground with initial enactment of the pharmacy  
3           tech bill for Article 28 facilities, and we'd  
4           like an opportunity to see how that goes  
5           first before expanding that any further.

6                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Are there other  
7           issues that impact your department that  
8           where -- that in the course of the budget,  
9           other than these dollar figures that you've  
10          included, that you think we should be paying  
11          attention to?

12                   INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: Yes. I  
13          think any time the Legislature adds a new  
14          program or a requirement on SED, we would  
15          respectfully request a 5 percent set-aside of  
16          funds for those programs to be administered  
17          so that the department could have, you know,  
18          sufficient funds to administratively provide  
19          the oversight and monitoring that are  
20          necessary to implement these new programs  
21          with fidelity.

22                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Thank you.

23                   And I just want to thank you -- the  
24          staff is always very available, and they're

1 very helpful in working through some of the  
2 questions that we have or getting us an  
3 answer if they are, you know, unable to do it  
4 personally. So I want to thank you for the  
5 close association.

6 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: Thank  
7 you, Chair Glick.

8 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

9 We now go to the Senate Higher Ed  
10 chair, Toby Stavisky.

11 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

12 And thank you for what you're doing  
13 during the -- I guess you could almost call  
14 it the interregnum. I think the department  
15 has been really responsive and helpful on so  
16 many occasions. And perhaps we forget to say  
17 thank you, but we do appreciate it.

18 And I too have concerns about the  
19 question of pharmacy techs, because we did  
20 pass the bill and it was chaptered last year,  
21 but it dealt only with hospital pharmacy  
22 techs. And in fact, until that time, there  
23 was no definition of what a pharmacy tech is  
24 or could do, what their scope could be, and

1           how many a licensed pharmacists could  
2           supervise.

3                         And I'm a little troubled by the  
4           proposal in -- I believe it's the Health and  
5           Mental Hygiene Law, which does talk about a  
6           pharmacist supervising six technicians. And  
7           I think your position --

8                         INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: Yes, we  
9           share those concerns. And we would like to  
10          actually get the chapter that was enacted  
11          last year off the ground before expanding it  
12          in any way so we can determine the impact of,  
13          you know, the new profession itself.

14                        SENATOR STAVISKY: Without question.

15                        And that took a long period of time of  
16          negotiation with all of the stakeholders.  
17          And to put it in the budget like this I think  
18          is maybe doing our consumers a disservice.

19                        I have a couple of other questions.  
20          What's not in your presentation,  
21          incidentally, is the issue of the CPAs. And  
22          I was curious because it talks about the  
23          \$300 fee. Would that fee go to SED or into  
24          the General Fund?

1 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: Thank you  
2 for raising that very important point,  
3 Senator.

4 That provision for the public  
5 licensure accounting firms -- obviously we've  
6 been working with the Legislature over the  
7 last couple of years on that proposal and  
8 will continue to do so and provide our  
9 comments and support on that proposal.

10 However, we are very concerned with  
11 the fee, because the fee will be going right  
12 to the General Fund, even though the State  
13 Education Department is responsible for  
14 administering and overseeing the public  
15 licensure firms. So that is something that  
16 is very concerning to us. Thank you.

17 SENATOR STAVISKY: And do you see  
18 associated costs that would be incurred by  
19 the department as a result of that fee,  
20 implementation of that fee?

21 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: Yes,  
22 there will be significant costs on the  
23 department for overseeing that program  
24 without -- if we don't receive those fees.

1                   SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you. You  
2 didn't mention it in your presentation.

3                   Getting back to the pharmacy tech  
4 issue -- and I saw the story in the New York  
5 Times, it was last Saturday. And it was, I  
6 know, a front page and then a two-page  
7 full-page spread in the Times about the  
8 mistakes that are being made, particularly in  
9 the chain pharmacies.

10                  Do you want to comment? I'm not sure  
11 we have that problem in New York; it was  
12 primarily reported throughout the country.  
13 But it's certainly something that could  
14 develop here. Has anybody seen the story  
15 and --

16                  INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: Yes, we  
17 have seen the stories. And I will actually  
18 ask Doug Lentivech, our deputy commissioner  
19 for the Office of Professions, to respond to  
20 that.

21                  DEPUTY COMMISSIONER LENTIVECH: Thank  
22 you. We see pharmacy discipline cases on a  
23 regular basis in New York, as they do in  
24 every state.

1           And, you know, it's a very challenging  
2           profession, because what you go to a  
3           pharmacist for is being exact and detailed in  
4           what you're asking for. It's like if you  
5           have a prescription for a certain medication  
6           and for a certain dosage of that medication,  
7           you want that dosage and you want that  
8           medication to be in the vial. And most of us  
9           are not sophisticated enough to protect  
10          ourselves, so that's what we look for.

11           As the demands of the practice, of  
12          the -- and in pharmacies, these are corporate  
13          practitioners. These are not PCs or PLLCs,  
14          these are corporate practitioners. And  
15          they're very expansive and very large. And  
16          to be competitive in our society, this is a  
17          profession that really, really sustains huge  
18          demands on their professional time. And we  
19          see these regularly in our disciplinary  
20          system, and I don't know that it's different  
21          in New York. But it's something we've been  
22          concerned about for a long time.

23           And I think that the proposals before  
24          us are something you've got to look at in

1 terms of those constraints are being put on  
2 our licensees.

3 SENATOR STAVISKY: And I assume, on a  
4 totally different issue -- but I'm sure you  
5 remember discussions during budget hearings  
6 of the processing time for some of these  
7 applications. I assume that the time has  
8 increased dramatically, am I correct, the  
9 time it takes SED to process?

10 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: So that  
11 is something we're looking at very seriously,  
12 Senator. It's something that we have  
13 actually shifted resources to. Where we have  
14 backlogs in our Office of Professions, we're  
15 actually taking staff from other units and  
16 targeting them toward the backlogs. We've  
17 been paying overtime for individuals to get  
18 through the backlog.

19 As we stated before, with the  
20 \$25.4 million investment in our OP  
21 Modernization Act, we believe that that's  
22 going to dramatically reduce the online  
23 processing because it will all be automated  
24 instead of paper.

1           Also, we have noticed a significant  
2           increase in the number -- we went from 10,000  
3           to 16,000 applications from non-New York-  
4           registered programs, so individuals coming in  
5           from out of state or a foreign country, where  
6           it takes a significant amount of time to  
7           review those educational credentials to  
8           ensure that they meet the requirements of our  
9           licensure requirements. This takes -- it's a  
10          very timely process, and so that has been a  
11          dramatic increase in the number of  
12          applications too.

13                 But like I said, this is a priority  
14                 for the department. We are targeting  
15                 resources in that area, doing everything we  
16                 possibly can to address the backlogs, because  
17                 we know individuals deserve timely feedback  
18                 on their applications.

19                 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you. Because  
20                 I represent -- well, Queens County is a  
21                 county with a lot of immigrants and a lot of  
22                 people who practice various professions in  
23                 other parts of the world. They come here to  
24                 live, and it is important to process their

1 applications in a timely fashion.

2 Two more quick questions. Number one,  
3 the time it takes to process approval  
4 programs for new programs at colleges. I  
5 spoke to Commissioner D'Agati -- and it's  
6 great to see you back -- about this just  
7 before -- I guess it was last year. And  
8 others have complained that it takes colleges  
9 a long time to get approval on new programs.

10 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: This is  
11 another issue which sometimes people forget  
12 exactly what we're trying to make sure. We  
13 want to ensure that the students that are in  
14 these programs receive a quality education  
15 and that their tuition is going to good use.

16 And sometimes when we're receiving  
17 these new program approvals, we're looking at  
18 it from the bottom up. We're looking at the  
19 entire curriculum for every program that they  
20 wish to offer, the resources within the  
21 institution to ensure that they have the  
22 stability that the institution needs to best  
23 serve those students. We're looking at the  
24 administration, the faculty, to make sure

1           that they're being taught by competent,  
2           qualified teachers. This is an extensive  
3           review. We're also doing site visits at the  
4           campuses to ensure that what's happening on  
5           the ground is what's reflected in their  
6           application.

7                         So yes, it does take a significant --  
8           you know, it's a timely and detailed process.  
9           But again, we have actually streamlined our  
10          process in the last couple of years under  
11          Leslie Templeman, our director in that unit.  
12          And I think -- I'm really proud of the  
13          efforts that that unit has made in improving  
14          their times on these program approvals.

15                        But yes, you're right, oftentimes some  
16          of them do take a longer amount of time.  
17          We're going back and forth for additional  
18          information from the individuals and the  
19          applicants and the institutions of higher  
20          education. Sometimes we don't get all the  
21          information we need up-front and we have to  
22          keep going back and forth with the  
23          institution until we get what we need to  
24          ensure that that's a quality program for

1           these kids.

2                    SENATOR STAVISKY:  It was suggested  
3           that there be a blind kind of study with  
4           names and specifics redacted, and then use  
5           volunteer administrators at various colleges  
6           for approval or preliminary approval to cut  
7           down on some of the time-consuming approval  
8           process.  And I had spoken to Commissioner  
9           D'Agati about this.

10                   And I still think it's a way of making  
11           sure that nobody knows the college  
12           involved -- because you certainly don't want  
13           to have your competition, so to speak,  
14           approved.  But on the other hand, you do want  
15           to approve the applications.  And I think we  
16           should talk further about this.

17                   INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE:  This is  
18           something we would be a little concerned  
19           with.  We'd want to make sure of consistency  
20           in the review of the applications and ensure,  
21           as you indicated, that your competitors  
22           aren't reviewing your application.  So we  
23           would want to make sure of that.

24                   SENATOR STAVISKY:  Thank you very

1 much. And welcome to the Regents.

2 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: Thank you  
3 so much.

4 SENATOR STAVISKY: Tomorrow we're  
5 interviewing future Regents.

6 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: Yes.

7 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We go to  
8 Senator Seward.

9 SENATOR SEWARD: Thank you.

10 I just wanted to follow up on the  
11 question that Senator Stavisky has been  
12 asking about, the approval process for new  
13 programs for our colleges. Is there an  
14 average time frame for new program approval  
15 that you can share with us? I know obviously  
16 it may vary, depending. But this is a --  
17 continues to be a concern that we hear from  
18 colleges, is the length of time.

19 And do you have an average time frame  
20 for approvals?

21 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: I  
22 don't -- I think it would depend on the type  
23 of program approval and for which specific  
24 type of registered program.

1                   But I will defer to John D'Agati, our  
2                   deputy commissioner for higher education. He  
3                   may have more insight.

4                   SENATOR SEWARD: I guess what I'm  
5                   asking is, has the time frame improved or  
6                   been shortened?

7                   DEPUTY COMMISSIONER D'AGATI: I think,  
8                   since we've streamlined the application  
9                   process, it has improved significantly. I  
10                  think where we -- as Commissioner Tahoe  
11                  mentioned, some applications come to us  
12                  incomplete, some are more complicated.

13                  And also, to make a distinction when  
14                  it's a program that is being reviewed by the  
15                  Office of Professions where licensure is  
16                  involved, there's even a more detailed review  
17                  than what we would do as a general, you know,  
18                  English program, for example. So there are  
19                  distinctions to be made in terms of the  
20                  application and the processes that it goes  
21                  through.

22                  But, you know, some applications  
23                  are -- come in, they're complete, and they're  
24                  reviewed within 30 days, and it goes through.

1 Others take somewhat longer. Others, because  
2 there's, you know, a lack of information, we  
3 need more detail, or there's concerns about  
4 who's teaching the courses, whether or not  
5 they're qualified or not, they take longer.

6 SENATOR SEWARD: Thank you, John. And  
7 it seems just like yesterday you were behind  
8 us here whispering in our ears.

9 (Laughter.)

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER D'AGATI: I know.

11 SENATOR SEWARD: One final question on  
12 proprietary colleges. Are there new  
13 regulations being considered in regard to our  
14 proprietary colleges?

15 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: We have  
16 heard there may be new regulations. We have  
17 not seen those regulations. Obviously, it  
18 would depend on the details of what those  
19 regulations said, you know, what our position  
20 would be on those.

21 However, I would say that our  
22 proprietary colleges -- I think we have 24 in  
23 the state at this moment. And the graduation  
24 rate at our proprietary colleges is at I

1 think 44 or 45 percent, which is higher than  
2 the nationwide average for proprietary  
3 schools.

4 As we've indicated before, our program  
5 approval for our proprietary schools is just  
6 as robust as any other higher education  
7 institution in this state. So we believe  
8 State Ed has, you know, significant oversight  
9 and accountability for these institutions.  
10 So we would be, you know, wary of any  
11 proposal, you know, as to what that would  
12 look like. But I would need to see the  
13 details of any regulation first.

14 SENATOR SEWARD: Where would those  
15 regulations come from, if not from you?

16 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: That's a  
17 great question. I would think that they  
18 would be coming from SED if there were going  
19 to be regulations on this. But we have heard  
20 something, as you've mentioned, but we  
21 haven't seen them yet.

22 SENATOR SEWARD: Okay. Thank you.

23 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: Thank  
24 you.

1                   CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We go to  
2                   Assemblywoman Simon.

3                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Thank you.  
4                   Thank you very much.

5                   And welcome to your first budget  
6                   hearing.

7                   INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: Thank  
8                   you.

9                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: I wanted to  
10                  thank you, first of all, for requesting the  
11                  additional funding to help provide supports  
12                  and services to students with disabilities in  
13                  New York schools. That's an area that has  
14                  been seriously underfunded for many, many  
15                  years, and we really need that money. So I  
16                  want to thank you for doing that.

17                  I also want to ask you a couple of  
18                  questions about teacher education. We have  
19                  identified and we know that there is a real  
20                  lack of education in our schools of education  
21                  on how to teach reading to our teachers. And  
22                  this is an effort that I've been working on  
23                  for some time, and I know I've worked with  
24                  the department in connection with a bill a

1           few years ago requiring that students with  
2           dyslexia be able to use that word in their  
3           eligibility documents, IEPs, et cetera.

4                     It's very clear that there are two  
5           issues that we need to address. One is early  
6           identification. And one good way to do that  
7           is to have teachers recognize the kinds of  
8           errors students are making so that they can  
9           help target instruction and identify those  
10          students.

11                    And the other is making sure that we  
12          actually give our teachers the tools they  
13          need in order to do that job. Fifteen to  
14          20 percent of kids have dyslexia or related  
15          learning disabilities, but they're in the  
16          same first and second grade, the same  
17          kindergarten, and the teachers don't know how  
18          to help them.

19                    So I would like to know what efforts  
20          the department is undertaking to ensure that  
21          the training that is given to teachers in New  
22          York State's teacher education/preparation  
23          programs are addressing the science of  
24          reading and how we teach reading in this

1 state.

2 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: This is  
3 something we're actually looking at right  
4 now, and our Early Child Blue Ribbon  
5 Committee has been evaluating the work in our  
6 birth to Grade 2 certificates in our teacher  
7 preparation programs in early learning. So I  
8 think this is something we'll be looking at  
9 as we're moving forward with our blue ribbon  
10 recommendations for early child learning.

11 This is something -- I agree with you,  
12 this is extremely important. We've also --  
13 the department has issued guidance or is  
14 working on guidance on dyslexia and the  
15 identification of dyslexia. So this is  
16 something our office of Special Ed is  
17 currently involved with. And as I said, on  
18 the teacher ed side, this is something we  
19 will be reviewing as part of our early child  
20 workgroup recommendations and what to do in  
21 our birth to Grade 2 pathways.

22 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Thank you. I  
23 want to just stress, if I can, that while  
24 teachers in special education need this

1 training as well, it's general ed teachers,  
2 because that's where the kids are so often.

3 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: You're  
4 absolutely right.

5 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: And just  
6 ensuring that the work that is done is really  
7 consistent with the science as we know it in  
8 terms of the way the brain works, and that so  
9 many kids need direct instruction in reading  
10 who are not necessarily students with  
11 disabilities but still need the same methods  
12 used in order for them to learn.

13 Thank you.

14 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: You're  
15 absolutely right. Thank you for bringing  
16 this to our attention. And we will  
17 definitely consider this as we move forward  
18 with our changes to the birth to Grade 2  
19 programs. Thank you.

20 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Thank you very  
21 much.

22 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: Thank  
23 you.

24 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: To the Senate.

1                   CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you. Thank  
2                   you for being here. I'm sorry I ran out for  
3                   a few minutes.

4                   So you run through your testimony, you  
5                   list out a number of different programs for  
6                   low-income students going to our colleges and  
7                   STEM programs and an additional million here,  
8                   an additional 2 million -- very small amounts  
9                   of money.

10                  Do you agree that college has proved  
11                  to be the most successful model for helping  
12                  people move into jobs and out of poverty?

13                  INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: I  
14                  think that's an interesting question. And I  
15                  think that's something that we're looking  
16                  at -- I mean, obviously we know and the data  
17                  reflects, and I think it's reflected in our  
18                  slides that we provided today, that students  
19                  who graduate with a high school diploma or a  
20                  high school equivalency diploma receive  
21                  1.5 percent more wage earnings than those who  
22                  do not. And those with an associate's  
23                  degree, it's 2 percent more -- or two times  
24                  more.

1                   So I think that there is some evidence  
2                   to show that going through college, you know,  
3                   you earn higher wage limitations.

4                   However, I think there's other  
5                   pathways as well for students, and that's  
6                   something we're considering as part of our  
7                   graduation measures project is, you know,  
8                   what are the additional pathways or what does  
9                   it mean to have an meaningful high school  
10                  diploma. And not all kids, as we know, are  
11                  geared to go to college, and they may have  
12                  other additional pathways that may suit their  
13                  needs and keep them in school for longer, you  
14                  know, through our CTE pathways or additional  
15                  pathways.

16                  So this is something we're actually  
17                  looking at and reviewing right now with the  
18                  Regents' graduation measures project.

19                  CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: But again -- so  
20                  maybe I asked it slightly wrong, because I'm  
21                  just pointing out you're talking about  
22                  serving 500 kids with a million dollars,  
23                  serving 4450 kids with 4.5 million.

24                  Next week, if you want to come back



1 say that you're absolutely right. These are  
2 our most successful programs. And we know  
3 that these kids without these programs,  
4 they're underrepresented youth who they may  
5 never have gone to college, and these  
6 programs keep them in college, give them the  
7 remedial supports that they need while  
8 they're in there, put them into summer  
9 training, giving them, you know, additional  
10 supports that they can graduate.

11 So thank you.

12 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you. Thank  
13 you.

14 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

15 We go to Assemblyman Epstein.

16 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Hi. Good  
17 afternoon, and thank you for being here for  
18 so long.

19 First I want to thank you for putting  
20 the priorities of \$15 million in your request  
21 for students with disabilities. And I wanted  
22 to see what you thought that \$15 million  
23 would offer. Obviously we have 72,000  
24 students with identifiable disabilities

1 across the state, and there's such a huge  
2 need. And I wonder, do you think  
3 15 million -- what does it get you? I know  
4 we haven't seen any new money for 20 years.  
5 What are the needs for students with  
6 disabilities right now across the state? And  
7 how do we ensure that those students who have  
8 disabilities can be successful and graduate  
9 from college and then move on to fulfilling  
10 employment?

11 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: I think  
12 one of the things we're noticing is that  
13 we're always worried about students with  
14 disabilities in our K-12 world. And one of  
15 the things is that when they get to college,  
16 we still need to be worried about those  
17 students with disabilities.

18 There's 75,000 individuals with  
19 disabilities across this state in our higher  
20 education community, and I think what we're  
21 seeing is we need -- the 15 million is to do  
22 a number of things. One is to ensure that we  
23 have the data collection that we need to know  
24 who those kids are, what types of

1 disabilities they have, what supports are  
2 needed, what are effective supports for those  
3 students. The monies are also used for  
4 summer training to get those kids who may not  
5 have ever even thought about going to  
6 college, but getting them ready to get it  
7 going and giving them the pre-college  
8 experience they need over the summer to get  
9 them ready for college. It's also to provide  
10 remedial supports and accommodations for  
11 those kids once they're in school so that  
12 they can be successful in college.

13 So I think it's for a number -- for  
14 all of those purposes.

15 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: And 75,000, as  
16 you said, students and 15 million, it doesn't  
17 seem that we're -- per student, it's not a  
18 lot of money. So --

19 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: It's not  
20 a lot of money. If you'd like to give us  
21 more, we would love that too.

22 (Laughter.)

23 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: I'm just  
24 kidding.

1                   ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: And so I want to  
2                   move on to -- and I would love to give you  
3                   more, so I -- you know, obviously we're not  
4                   the only players in this conversation. But I  
5                   think it's well-needed.

6                   I want to talk more about disclosure  
7                   of information you mentioned from proprietary  
8                   schools, and the government might be coming  
9                   forward with regulations. But more of my  
10                  interest is making sure the students across  
11                  the state have good access to good  
12                  information, whether they choose to go to a  
13                  proprietary school, CUNY or SUNY, or a  
14                  nonprofit institution.

15                  Do you feel like there's enough  
16                  information out there for people to make  
17                  informed choices about what the default  
18                  rates are three, five, 10 years out, you  
19                  know, what money is being spent on student  
20                  education versus paying for advertising, what  
21                  money is -- in the for-profit context, how  
22                  much profit is being taken out of the system?

23                  I wanted to get a sense of if there's  
24                  enough public disclosure for students to make

1 informed choices around decisions they're  
2 making.

3 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: I think  
4 more public disclosure is always best. And  
5 the more transparent you can be so that  
6 students know exactly where they're going and  
7 what they're going to get out of their  
8 educational experience, I think that's always  
9 helpful.

10 I'll turn to John D'Agati as well, our  
11 deputy commissioner for P-20, to see if he  
12 has any additional thoughts on this.

13 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER D'AGATI: Yeah, I  
14 do believe there's a lot of information out  
15 there. I worry that people don't always know  
16 where to go to find it. But there is an  
17 abundance of information about graduation  
18 rates, about employment, about costs  
19 associated with attending.

20 But oftentimes people don't know how  
21 to access it. And we probably in the  
22 department can help with that in trying to  
23 consolidate a lot of that information and put  
24 it someplace where it's easily accessible and

1           also understandable.

2                   ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN:  So when you say  
3           put it someplace, you mean put it on your  
4           website or have the universities put it on  
5           theirs, or what are you thinking?

6                   DEPUTY COMMISSIONER D'AGATI:  All of  
7           the above.  Particularly put it on the  
8           university's website and making it more  
9           readily available.

10                   ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN:  Yeah, I think  
11           that would be really helpful.  Because I --  
12           you know, I have actually a daughter in  
13           college right now and a son who's in high  
14           school, and for their decisions, you know,  
15           they -- it wasn't readily accessible to them,  
16           like what this would cost them versus like  
17           how do you -- you have to compare apples to  
18           apples, right, and it's really hard to do  
19           that, especially for some institutions, when  
20           people don't really understand the options  
21           that are available and they don't have  
22           parents, you know, who are fortunately  
23           educated and can help them navigate the  
24           system about loans, what it means, programs,

1 access, all those things that come up that  
2 people don't really understand. So great  
3 to -- happy to partner with you on that.

4 And my last question is I'm really  
5 thinking about dedicated funding for public  
6 education. So I know we have this dance  
7 where you come ask us for money and then we  
8 have to figure out if we can work with the  
9 Senate and the Assembly and the Governor to  
10 get a budget. What do you think about having  
11 a real, dedicated funding stream to go  
12 directly to institutions of higher ed and not  
13 have to have this dance up here in Albany,  
14 there are dedicated streams.

15 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: I will  
16 defer to Phyllis Morris, our chief financial  
17 officer, on that one.

18 SED CFO MORRIS: So there's pros and  
19 cons to that, as with everything. If you  
20 were to do that, I would just suggest having  
21 something very specific in statute that -- so  
22 that your intended purpose is actually  
23 achievable.

24 Having the funds come to the State

1 Education Department for distribution, you  
2 know, we can ensure that the funds are  
3 distributed in a way that meets the  
4 legislative intent. And so that would be the  
5 only caveat we'd put on that.

6 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

7 Assemblywoman Hyndman.

8 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Thank you,  
9 Madam Chair.

10 Commissioner Tahoe, I think you're  
11 doing a tremendous job for someone who's  
12 interim acting, so you're very knowledgeable.

13 Mr. D'Agati, I thought you left.

14 (Laughter.)

15 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER D'AGATI: I  
16 thought I did too.

17 (Laughter.)

18 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: They pull you  
19 back in.

20 So this is more of an observation over  
21 the years. I note that your proprietary  
22 school supervision is under access, under  
23 Deputy Commissioner Smith. It used to be  
24 higher ed.

1           And the reason why I'm bringing this  
2           up is because I know that when it comes to  
3           that sector, there's a lot of misinformation,  
4           there's a lot of lumping proprietary schools,  
5           non-degree-granting, into the degree-granting  
6           proprietary school sector.

7           And how would we discuss or have an  
8           opportunity to discuss putting that back  
9           under higher ed? Just because a lot of the  
10          legislators don't really know about that  
11          sector until there's a problem. Not you,  
12          Chair Glick. But a lot of us don't -- I  
13          do -- a lot of members don't always know  
14          about that sector till there's a problem.

15          And it is postsecondary. We're  
16          talking about adults, those who are -- maybe  
17          have received a TASC instead of the GED, and  
18          those who are looking to change careers. The  
19          information they provide, the amount of jobs  
20          that stay in New York State because people  
21          have further education. That's something  
22          that used to be under higher ed, and I would  
23          really like to talk about how do we get it  
24          back under higher ed. I see Dr. Owen is here

1           too, so I understand, you know, that this is  
2           a particular area of interest and it's not  
3           under -- and we don't get to really  
4           scrutinize that sector and talk about it as  
5           colleagues, about what those schools are  
6           doing and how they're educating our residents  
7           here in New York State.

8                         INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: I think  
9           you're right, we do receive a lot of  
10          different questions regarding the differences  
11          between our BPSS schools and our proprietary  
12          schools and our proprietary colleges.  
13          They're two very different things.

14                        And so traditionally, you know -- and  
15          I will defer to Kevin on this, obviously,  
16          because he may have more history than I do on  
17          this issue. But we can definitely work with  
18          you on this.

19                        But like I said, they are two very  
20          different things. They're -- you know, adult  
21          education has traditionally been seen as in  
22          our access unit, and that is something where  
23          we think of these licensed private career  
24          schools as more adult education and getting

1           them toward careers, where the colleges and  
2           universities are somewhat in a separate world  
3           that are higher education, and that's how  
4           they've been treated.

5                     But this is something we can  
6           definitely explore with you moving forward.  
7           But I would defer --

8                     ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: I also bring  
9           it up because you talk about -- in one of  
10          these you talk about alternative pathways.  
11          And so I think as New York State, as we've  
12          grown and evolved, we're seeing that a lot of  
13          students who go and get a four-year degree  
14          may not get a job in that career. Right?  
15          And whatever debt or whatever issues that  
16          they are dealing with, then they look to that  
17          sector to change their career or get a job or  
18          make -- the shorter-term training gets them  
19          into the workforce.

20                     So that's why I do think -- it is  
21          different, but we're talking about adults,  
22          and we recognize adults as those who are 18  
23          who may not go to college and use those  
24          schools in order to get into the workforce,

1 and may go on later -- to get an income, go  
2 on later and then decide to go to a four-year  
3 degree-granting institution later. That's  
4 why.

5 INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: You're  
6 bringing up a very good point. I mean, and  
7 this is something that we can definitely talk  
8 about later. And I don't know if Kevin has  
9 any additional thoughts on this.

10 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SMITH: Well, only  
11 to say I know you're not suggesting that you  
12 want to move it to higher ed because I'm  
13 doing a bad job with it.

14 (Laughter.)

15 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: No, no. Not  
16 at all.

17 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER SMITH: Just to  
18 give you a sense of size and scope, 391  
19 licensed career schools, non-degree, over  
20 200,000 students. Programs, career programs  
21 ranging from coding -- which is growing  
22 astronomically every day in the New York City  
23 metropolitan area and across the state -- a  
24 full range of allied health programs, dog

1 grooming, cosmetology. You name it, we do it  
2 in the proprietary schools sector.

3 It is an important postsecondary  
4 destination. I wish all of our school  
5 counselors would recognize the opportunity to  
6 send and advise students to attend those  
7 programs.

8 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Thank you.

9 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Assembly?

10 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We go to  
11 Assemblywoman Glick to close.

12 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Just to go back  
13 to the potential or existing teacher  
14 shortage, what are -- and you say you're  
15 having conversations with regional partners  
16 about what kind of shortages they're facing  
17 and so forth.

18 What more can we be doing to -- you  
19 know, I'm not sure that people realize that  
20 there is a teacher shortage if they don't  
21 have kids in school. That's a large number  
22 of the population. They're older, they don't  
23 like paying school taxes as it is, so can't  
24 we get by with fewer teachers, and so forth.

1                   So what exactly could or should we be  
2                   doing to address this issue, and why do you  
3                   think we have a teacher shortage? What are  
4                   the issues that prevent people from pursuing  
5                   teaching?

6                   INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: I think  
7                   that's a very loaded question and one which I  
8                   will answer in several different ways.

9                   First I'll say I think the teaching  
10                  profession, over the last few years,  
11                  unfortunately, it doesn't have the reputation  
12                  that it did once have. And I think that's  
13                  the first thing that needs to change.

14                  I think the way strategically across  
15                  the state the way that everyone, including  
16                  parents, other teachers and administrators in  
17                  school buildings, it's all in how we think of  
18                  the profession and treat those teachers and  
19                  the way that -- the respect that they feel in  
20                  the classrooms and how we're raising our kids  
21                  to say going into the teaching profession is,  
22                  you know, a wonderful thing, you can help  
23                  other children or students.

24                  I think it's the way we talk about the

1 teaching profession and the teaching  
2 profession in general in the mindset of  
3 people in the education field.

4 So I think, first thing first, we need  
5 to change the way the profession is viewed in  
6 public.

7 Secondly, I think that we need to --  
8 State Ed is taking a look at our regulatory  
9 requirements on our certification pathways to  
10 see if there's ways in which we can, you  
11 know, provide more flexibility, additional  
12 pathways for teachers to get certified and  
13 licensed in the classroom.

14 I think other ways is our fee voucher  
15 program where we're asking for \$1.2 million  
16 in getting certification fee waivers so that  
17 people -- you know, disadvantaged students  
18 might be able to take those exams without  
19 paying for them, because we've heard that the  
20 fees are a barrier.

21 Another issue is I think we're looking  
22 at our higher ed institutions and we're  
23 talking to them regularly -- and John and I  
24 are having conversations about really looking

1 at the regional needs and trying to ensure  
2 that you're opening teacher ed programs where  
3 there's an actual need, rather than having an  
4 oversupply of early childhood programs.

5 Looking at if your regional need is  
6 special ed, open a special ed program, open a  
7 bilingual program. We're really trying to,  
8 you know, have people in programs think about  
9 ways to -- and talking about data sharing.  
10 John and I have been discussing ways in which  
11 we can try to share data with various  
12 regional partners to say: This is where the  
13 needs in your region are, take a look at  
14 these needs and try to design programs that  
15 meet those needs.

16 And really taking a look at -- we're  
17 looking holistically at this, literally how  
18 the teaching profession is viewed, our  
19 certification requirements, our higher  
20 education partners. We're working with our  
21 stakeholder groups to say, you know, how can  
22 we make -- how can we change this dynamic?

23 Because something has to change now.  
24 We're in severe shortages across the state in

1 areas where there shouldn't be. I mean,  
2 special ed and bilingual, we need certified  
3 teachers who are qualified in those areas to  
4 be serving those vulnerable populations of  
5 students.

6 And this is something that we're very  
7 concerned with and that we are addressing  
8 immediately and taking steps to address  
9 immediately.

10 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Just one area  
11 that came to mind was some friends who are,  
12 you know, of a certain age -- and so some  
13 people actually have the great wisdom to  
14 semiretire or actually retire -- who have  
15 been college professors, they don't have a  
16 certification, they don't have -- they've  
17 taught in college, but they haven't taught  
18 and gotten a master's in ed. And they may be  
19 in some communities that are short of  
20 teachers, and there's no -- they're not, at  
21 age 63 or 66, going back to get a master's in  
22 education so that they can then apply to  
23 teach in a school in a community that they're  
24 living in.

1                   Is that an -- is there -- I don't know  
2                   that it's a huge number of people, but I  
3                   think that there are a lot of folks who want  
4                   to give back and --

5                   INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE: And I  
6                   think that the one pathway you're just  
7                   describing is our Transitional G pathway,  
8                   which is a certification pathway that we  
9                   offer for faculty of higher education  
10                  institutions to try to lessen the teacher  
11                  certification requirements for those folks so  
12                  that they can get into the classroom.  
13                  Because that's something we've -- especially  
14                  in STEM areas, as we have it in the science,  
15                  technology, engineering and math areas, and I  
16                  think we've expanded that as well.

17                  So that's something that we currently  
18                  have a pathway for. And if you want to refer  
19                  us the names of those individuals, we'd be  
20                  happy to help them work through this.

21                  ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Yeah, maybe just  
22                  learning a little bit more about that.  
23                  Because I think there is a -- you know, a  
24                  cohort of people who might be available in

1           some of these areas that -- you know, they've  
2           left the city and they're, you know,  
3           looking --

4                     INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE:  And I  
5           think you're right, Chair Glick.  And we're  
6           trying to really think out of the box, like  
7           what other types of people would be -- have  
8           the education and experience, maybe in a  
9           nontraditional pathway, but still be  
10          qualified to serve those students.  So that  
11          is something we're thinking through  
12          multiple -- you know, every way we can, into  
13          which, you know, non-alternative pathways.

14                    ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK:  Thanks so much.

15                    CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN:  Thank you.  I  
16          believe that's all the questions we have.  
17          Thank you for being here --

18                    INTERIM COMMISSIONER TAHOE:  Thank  
19          you.  Thank you.

20                    CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER:  Thank you.

21                    CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN:  -- with us  
22          today.

23                    Next we'll be hearing from New York  
24          State Higher Education Services Corporation,

1 Dr. Guillermo Linares, president.

2 Whenever you're ready to begin.

3 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Good  
4 afternoon. Chairs Krueger, Weinstein,  
5 Stavisky, Glick, and to all my former  
6 colleagues in the Senate and Assembly, thank  
7 you for the opportunity to speak today about  
8 the Governor's 2020-2021 Executive Budget  
9 recommendations that impact the New York  
10 State Higher Education Services Corporation,  
11 HESC.

12 I'm Dr. Guillermo Linares, president  
13 of HESC, and this morning I am joined by my  
14 executive vice president, Elsa Magee.

15 HESC is responsible for administering  
16 more than two dozen New York State student  
17 financial aid and college access programs  
18 that help to ease college costs for New York  
19 State students and families, including the  
20 first-in-the-nation Excelsior Scholarship and  
21 the newly implemented Senator José Peralta  
22 New York State DREAM Act. Collectively,  
23 these programs provide nearly \$1.05 billion  
24 in financial aid awards to support the

1 college costs of more than 343,000 students  
2 attending public and private colleges inside  
3 our state.

4 New York continues to be a leader in  
5 college access, including the nation's first  
6 free-tuition program, the Excelsior  
7 Scholarship. This milestone program has  
8 opened the doors of higher education to  
9 thousands of working- and middle-class  
10 families making \$125,000 or less, while  
11 helping students complete their degrees on  
12 time.

13 In addition to providing free college  
14 tuition to more than 20,400 students in its  
15 first year and more than 25,000 students in  
16 its second year, the numbers are coupled with  
17 other promising outcomes, including higher  
18 graduation rates, increases in the percentage  
19 of students taking 15 credits, and higher  
20 retention rates. This suggests that these  
21 students will incur less total costs in  
22 completing their degrees and begin their  
23 careers sooner.

24 To expand this transformational

1 opportunity to more middle-class families,  
2 the Governor has proposed to raise the  
3 Excelsior eligibility threshold from \$125,000  
4 to \$150,000 for New York's families. By  
5 increasing the threshold, more than  
6 230,000 -- or nearly 58 percent -- New York  
7 resident students will be able to attend SUNY  
8 or CUNY tuition-free.

9 But it's not just Excelsior. New York  
10 spends over \$1 billion each year on aid for  
11 the financially neediest students through  
12 TAP, Opportunity Programs, and the Aid for  
13 Part-Time Studies program. New York ranks  
14 first in the nation in support for  
15 undergraduate need-based student financial  
16 aid. And the recent implementation of the  
17 Senator José Peralta New York State DREAM Act  
18 has further opened the door to higher  
19 education, allowing thousands of undocumented  
20 New York State students access to TAP and all  
21 other state award and scholarship programs  
22 available to their citizen peers.

23 To date, nearly 75 percent of the  
24 reviewed applications have been determined

1 eligible to receive TAP, Excelsior, ETA and  
2 other New York State financial aid awards.  
3 Our investment in higher education continues  
4 to open doors to all New Yorkers.

5 In closing, Governor Cuomo is a  
6 leading voice in protecting access to higher  
7 education for everyone. Since 2012, funding  
8 for higher education has increased by nearly  
9 \$1.8 billion -- 29 percent -- from \$6 billion  
10 to \$7.8 billion in the fiscal year 2021  
11 Executive Budget. This investment includes  
12 nearly \$1.3 billion for strategic programs to  
13 make college more affordable and encourage  
14 the best and brightest students to build  
15 their future in New York.

16 The Governor's recommendations for  
17 higher education programs continue to pave a  
18 path to an affordable and high-quality  
19 college education, and HESC is pleased to  
20 play a vital role in providing New York State  
21 students with a gateway to a successful  
22 academic and professional career.

23 Thank you, and I would be glad to  
24 answer any questions you may have.

1                   CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We go to  
2                   Assemblywoman Glick.

3                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Thank you very  
4                   much. It's good to see you, both of you.

5                   HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Same here.

6                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: How many  
7                   students -- I think you said that there are  
8                   45,000 students who have gotten into  
9                   Excelsior. In your testimony, in addition to  
10                  providing tuition to more than 20,000  
11                  students in the first year and more than  
12                  25 {sic} students in its second year -- did  
13                  that not refer to Excelsior?

14                  HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: The second  
15                  year is 25,000 students.

16                  ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Right. The  
17                  first year was 20, and then it was 25. So is  
18                  that --

19                  HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Those are the  
20                  first two years. We're in the third year.

21                  ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Right. Out of  
22                  those 45,000, how many students fell out of  
23                  the program?

24                  HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: We don't --

1 we don't have that information at this point.

2 HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: It's a cumulative  
3 25,000 are currently receiving. Between  
4 Year 1 and Year 2, some have graduated who  
5 received awards in Year 1. And then we have  
6 new --

7 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Could you just  
8 pull that a little bit closer? Elsa, you're  
9 such a soft-spoken person.

10 HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: Sorry.

11 So the net number is 25,000 for the  
12 current year, and growing for 2019-2020.

13 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Do we know how  
14 many students each year fall out of TAP  
15 eligibility because they haven't maintained  
16 their prescribed program of study?

17 HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: We can get you  
18 that data. I think what we find more with  
19 TAP is that there are fewer students who are  
20 failing to meet the standards for academic  
21 progress than there are who just don't come  
22 back for another term.

23 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Okay. Well, it  
24 would be helpful to know how that's going.

1 HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: Yeah, we can --

2 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: And also I am  
3 concerned about students who go into a  
4 scholarship program, they and their families  
5 assume that they will be without a debt on  
6 that portion. Obviously if they go to a  
7 school out of town, they're going to have a  
8 room and board cost. But they assume that  
9 their tuition is covered. And then they fall  
10 out of the program for any number of reasons,  
11 and it turns into a loan. Which, you know,  
12 sort of after the fact is a shock. It's  
13 like, you know, buying a car that was a gift  
14 from a relative who then says, You know what,  
15 you changed the oil, now you've got to pay  
16 for the car.

17 That's sort of like a little bit of a  
18 problem. It may be only for a very small  
19 percentage, but it is of concern to those  
20 individuals. And we've had that happen with  
21 students in the STEM scholarship who are  
22 unable to find work.

23 So what are the forbearances that are  
24 allowed -- and what are the hardships -- in

1           Excelsior, in TAP, and in the STEM program?

2                   HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: I'd say, first,  
3           if there's a student who you know of who has  
4           had their award converted to a loan because  
5           they weren't able to find a job, they should  
6           contact us, because we do have -- there are  
7           qualifications under which they would not  
8           have to repay the loan.

9                   So we do have provisions in the law  
10          for students who really cannot find a job in  
11          New York State, and other hardships that --  
12          where it would not convert to a loan.

13                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Are --

14                   HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: And what I --  
15          what I would add to that is that one thing  
16          that we -- in communicating with both SUNY  
17          and CUNY, for Excelsior students, be mindful  
18          of the 30 credits that they have to carry.  
19          There's been sensitivity to really lend, in  
20          the college where they attend, extra guidance  
21          and support and to be able to guide them to  
22          the possible way so that they don't lose the  
23          scholarship.

24                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Well, you know,

1           stuff happens in life. And so a parent could  
2           die, which disrupts -- you know, in some ways  
3           college is the least of their problems,  
4           except they've gone for two years and then  
5           their parent dies, and then there's this  
6           upheaval. They may be sick themselves. A  
7           friend of mine has -- not going to a school  
8           in this state, but the kid had to withdraw  
9           because of a health problem.

10                        So these things happen in real life.  
11           And I'm wondering how flexible we have -- you  
12           know, and whether there's on your website, if  
13           somebody has been looking and saying, hey,  
14           this looks like the right thing for me, and  
15           then it turns out it didn't work out, is  
16           there anything there that lets them know you  
17           don't have to know Assemblymember So-and-so  
18           or Senator So-and-so, that you can actually  
19           reach out to HESC for an amelioration of  
20           this -- what is a crisis?

21                        If somebody -- and I -- we did a bill  
22           specifically because of some problems people  
23           had upstate on the STEM scholarship. It was  
24           very upsetting, and the reaction from

1 Executive -- members of the Executive who I  
2 spoke with about the veto around the STEM  
3 scholarship, doing something to change some  
4 of the postgraduate requirements, was, you  
5 know, not overly encouraging.

6 So how do people know that if they've  
7 had a crisis they can reach out to you? Is  
8 there something specific like "in the event  
9 of a problem, call us"?

10 HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: Well, what we do  
11 each year for anyone who's receiving a  
12 scholarship that has a post-graduate service  
13 requirement, we reach out to the students  
14 every year to see if they're still in the  
15 right program, et cetera. But if they're not  
16 when they respond back to us, that's the time  
17 that we really try to identify the reason for  
18 that and if they're really eligible for one  
19 of these hardship exemptions or not.

20 So we do have annual contact with  
21 these students to make sure they did attend  
22 for the year in the program, met those  
23 requirements, and if they're going to  
24 continue further or if there's a reason why



1 perhaps you can get us some information if in  
2 fact there have been scholarships that have  
3 turned into loans. I'm not sure how much of  
4 an issue it is.

5 But they contacted their  
6 Assemblymember, who then contacted me. So  
7 clearly somehow they didn't know that there  
8 was help through you all. So that's -- you  
9 know, we want to just make certain that when  
10 students think that we've made a pact with  
11 them and they've, you know, signed on and  
12 then they have a problem, they -- I just want  
13 to be sure they know. And, you know, we'll  
14 check the website. Maybe there's something  
15 there that should be added into this -- not  
16 where you have to hunt for it, like now  
17 you're in deep trouble, now you can call us.  
18 But something a little bit more closer up to  
19 where they're signing up for this but should  
20 there be a crisis, you can contact us. I  
21 mean, that I think would be helpful.

22 Thanks very much.

23 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

24 Senator Toby Stavisky.

1                   SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

2                   Good to see you again, Dr. Linares,  
3                   Ms. Magee.

4                   Eleven days ago I sent a letter to  
5                   HESC, dated -- and it was emailed and I think  
6                   regular mail. And it said, and I'll just  
7                   read the first paragraph: "In anticipation  
8                   of the February 4, 2020 budget hearing, I  
9                   want to provide you with the opportunity to  
10                  gather information because I will be asking  
11                  questions relevant to HESC. I would like to  
12                  avoid 'I'll get back to you' responses. If  
13                  it's easier, substitute the calendar year  
14                  instead of the academic or fiscal year."

15                  I never got any of those answers. So  
16                  I don't want to read you the questions that I  
17                  gave you ahead of time. I'm looking at your  
18                  testimony, and I don't see -- you know, I see  
19                  sort of a sketchy response.

20                  We want to know about the DREAM Act,  
21                  Enhanced TAP, Excelsior, and how it's  
22                  working -- the number of students that are  
23                  applying, the number that are rejected --  
24                  broken down by program -- the number that are

1 rejected and the reason that they're  
2 rejected. And all of these questions I think  
3 should be answered in anticipation of budget  
4 negotiations.

5 I have no further questions.

6 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Madam Chair,  
7 I am in receipt of your letter, or of the  
8 questions that you posed. We want to be able  
9 to provide to you all the specific numbers  
10 that go with each one of the questions that  
11 you posed. I am prepared to give you a  
12 general sense of some of the questions that  
13 you posed now. And immediately follow up  
14 with you, responding with specific numbers  
15 that we are looking into.

16 As you understand, the DREAM Act is  
17 just being rolled out now, so the numbers are  
18 fluid, but we are preparing to respond with  
19 your request.

20 With regards to Excelsior, we do have  
21 the numbers for the first and second year in  
22 general terms. We do have a clear sense now  
23 of where the third year will take us, which  
24 we fully anticipate we are now at 28 -- over

1           28,000 students will benefit from Excelsior.  
2           By the time this fiscal year -- the school  
3           year ends, we fully anticipate about 30,000  
4           students will be receiving the Excelsior  
5           Scholarship.

6                     I can tell you that the projected  
7           funding for Excelsior is around 120 million  
8           to cover the program. That is the projection  
9           that we have.

10                    I can share with you that the specific  
11           question that you asked regarding the DREAM  
12           Act -- first let me preamble, before I give  
13           you the number, to share that we had a very  
14           successful rollout for the DREAM Act. We  
15           were aggressive in approaching the vast  
16           network of organizations that provide  
17           services to immigrant communities and engage  
18           them, understanding how important it was to  
19           address the fear factor that so many Dreamers  
20           and immigrant communities, with aggressive  
21           federal intervention, have.

22                    And we engaged those institutional --  
23           along with our partners, CUNY, SUNY, and  
24           other universities, in helping prepare a

1 simplified application for the Dreamers.  
2 Bear in mind that many of them are not  
3 experienced filling out financial aid  
4 applications, so we wanted to simplify it.

5 The other thing we did was to change  
6 the platform to address the issue of fear but  
7 also safety, and also confidentiality with  
8 them. We did away with Social Security  
9 numbers, which is the system we have to  
10 provide financial aid across the state, and  
11 we now use ID numbers for students. That was  
12 quite an undertaking. And in an eight-week  
13 time frame we launched the application, also  
14 crafted guidance, step by step, for the  
15 students to be able to successfully apply.  
16 And over 5,000 Dreamers applied for the  
17 scholarship.

18 Of those that we have reviewed thus  
19 far, 75 percent are eligible to receive  
20 financial assistance, primarily through TAP,  
21 but also a number of them were able to apply  
22 for Excelsior and ETA. The vast majority,  
23 though, TAP.

24 But we are now in the middle of

1 reviewing all of those applications. Given  
2 how short a time frame we had, I have to say  
3 the rollout has been successful, and we have  
4 worked very closely, again, with many  
5 partners to make sure that any issue -- we  
6 have no issue whatsoever in terms of the  
7 rollout or the program. And whenever we had  
8 any issue or concern, they were addressed as  
9 we needed.

10 SENATOR STAVISKY: That's why I sent  
11 the letter.

12 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Yeah.  
13 Regarding the other question that you posed,  
14 which I'd like to respond to now, in terms of  
15 the time frame for applying for Excelsior,  
16 once we do the residency and the income  
17 questions, we are able to have a 48-hour  
18 turnaround for the majority of those that  
19 apply, particularly if they're freshmen.

20 If they have been attending school  
21 previously, we then have to rely on the  
22 college that they attended to provide that  
23 information.

24 And for the DREAM Act, once a Dreamer

1 submits an application and fulfills all the  
2 requirements, we have a response, a  
3 turnaround of 10 days to be able to get back  
4 to them.

5 SENATOR STAVISKY: You will provide  
6 the information.

7 Let me ask a question. I understand  
8 that the appropriation on the DREAM Act, as  
9 an example, is about 27 million, something  
10 like that. What happens if the money is not  
11 expended in that particular budget year?  
12 What happens to the unused money that has  
13 been appropriated?

14 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Well, the  
15 application for the DREAM Act is year-round.  
16 So we've seen over 5,000 have applied, but  
17 this is an ongoing process.

18 SENATOR STAVISKY: That's not my  
19 question. My question is what happens if you  
20 do not allocate all of the \$27 million?

21 HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: Those are General  
22 Fund dollars.

23 SENATOR STAVISKY: What happens to the  
24 money? Does it go back to the General Fund,

1 does it go into your -- is it reappropriated?

2 What happens to it?

3 HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: The funds will  
4 stay in the General Fund if they're not  
5 utilized --

6 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Right, in the  
7 General Fund.

8 (Overtalk.)

9 SENATOR STAVISKY: They'll stay in  
10 HESC --

11 HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: Yeah, they're  
12 there and that's where they would remain.

13 SENATOR STAVISKY: Okay.

14 HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: But if there are  
15 awards that are owed in the future for this  
16 current year, there are reappropriations. So  
17 the funds -- the student would still get the  
18 payment, correct.

19 SENATOR STAVISKY: It doesn't go back  
20 to the General Fund.

21 HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: It -- it's in the  
22 General Fund. It's never come to us, it's  
23 paid out of the General Fund in all  
24 instances. So it would sit there.

1                   HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Through the  
2 colleges where the Dreamers attend.

3                   SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

4                   CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.  
5 Assembly.

6                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Mr. Epstein.

7                   ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Thank you for  
8 being here and taking the time to talk to us  
9 about these really important issues.

10                  Just, I know, with Senator Stavisky's  
11 issues, how many people applied for the DREAM  
12 Act?

13                  HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: How many  
14 people applied?

15                  ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Yeah.

16                  HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: This year  
17 for --

18                  ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: This year.

19                  HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: -- Excelsior  
20 or DREAM?

21                  ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: DREAM.

22                  HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: DREAM. Over  
23 5,000 initiated the application.

24                  ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Right. And how

1 many people applied for --

2 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Seventy-five  
3 percent of those completed.

4 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: When you say  
5 "completed," they were awarded? When you say  
6 "completed," what do you mean?

7 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: There are  
8 5,000 completed applications.

9 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: And those 5,000  
10 were awarded TAP?

11 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Mostly TAP  
12 has been awarded for those that have been  
13 processed. And we're currently in the  
14 process of --

15 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Of those 5,000,  
16 how many were rejected?

17 HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: So 5,000 have  
18 completed applications. Some are pending  
19 review. Of the ones that have been reviewed,  
20 75 percent -- it's really 73 percent -- of  
21 the reviewed applications have been deemed  
22 eligible.

23 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: And how many  
24 have been reviewed?

1                   HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: We've had --  
2                   about 4,000 of the 5,000 have been reviewed.  
3                   So we have about 2100, 2200 students who have  
4                   already been deemed eligible for --

5                   ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: So out of 5,000,  
6                   2100 or 2200 have been deemed eligible.

7                   HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: Yeah. And some  
8                   of those -- we have about a thousand that  
9                   really have not been reviewed yet. So they  
10                  could also be eligible. And students are  
11                  continuing to apply as well.

12                  ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Thank you.

13                  How many people have applied for  
14                  Excelsior?

15                  HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: About 52 --  
16                  this year?

17                  ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: This year.

18                  HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: About 52 --  
19                  over 52,000 have applied. We have identified  
20                  eligible about 28 -- over 28,000.

21                  ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Thank you.

22                  Have you thought about -- we've heard  
23                  a lot around TAP being at an insufficient  
24                  level at this point, with tuition over

1           \$7,000. Would you advocate increasing the  
2           TAP award for students?

3                   HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Well, as you  
4           know, TAP is the bulk of the funding that we  
5           provide across the state, nearly a billion  
6           dollars. And of course I understand that  
7           there are discussions taking place about how  
8           best to use or change the TAP --

9                   ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Do you believe  
10          TAP should go up for students?

11                   HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: The need, for  
12          students, is always there. We -- we have  
13          specific populations that could benefit from  
14          that. But the answer is yes, but it's a  
15          question that the Legislature and the  
16          Governor need to address.

17                   ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Thank you.

18                   And I'm wondering, the TAP dollars,  
19          what percentage of it goes to for-profit  
20          schools, nonprofit schools, versus public  
21          schools?

22                   HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Well, we can  
23          provide you with a breakdown of --

24                   ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: That would be

1 great.

2 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: -- of all of  
3 that breakdown. You know, across a billion  
4 dollars is significant in all three sectors,  
5 the for-profit, nonprofit and also --

6 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: And do you  
7 maintain default rates for all three sectors  
8 separately?

9 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: I'm sorry?

10 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Do you maintain  
11 default rates for all three sectors  
12 separately?

13 HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: Not by sector.  
14 We have, by colleges, default -- cohort  
15 default rates by college.

16 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: I'm sorry, I  
17 couldn't hear that.

18 HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: We have cohort  
19 default rates by college but not by sector.

20 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Not by sector,  
21 but you do by college. And how far out do  
22 you do? Do you do three years or do you do  
23 five and 10 years?

24 HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: It's a three-year

1 look.

2 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Do you keep  
3 information five and 10 years out as well?

4 HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: No, the  
5 national -- we use the national formula, and  
6 it's always a --

7 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: But if they're  
8 not paying back, you don't -- you don't have  
9 any data that says what happens after three  
10 years? There's nothing that you maintain?

11 HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: We don't.

12 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: And is there a  
13 reason you don't, just to see post-three  
14 years how people are doing with their loan  
15 repayment?

16 HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: We don't -- we  
17 don't touch all of the students who have  
18 student loans. We only have information on  
19 students who either got loans with us, now  
20 going back more than 10 years ago, or --

21 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: So why don't you  
22 just maintain that record five, 10 years out  
23 so we know past the three years how people  
24 are doing just with your loans? It would be

1 great to have that information as well.

2 Yeah, I'd appreciate, if you have that  
3 information, it would be great for you to  
4 gather it.

5 And I know my time is up, so thank you  
6 both.

7 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Okay, thank you.

8 Senator Jim Seward.

9 SENATOR SEWARD: Thank you, Madam  
10 Chair.

11 And Dr. Linares, Ms. Magee, thank you  
12 for being here.

13 In terms of the rollout of the DREAM  
14 Act program, am I correct in saying that the  
15 undocumented students do not have to fill out  
16 the FAFSA forms?

17 HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: That's correct.

18 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: That's  
19 correct.

20 SENATOR SEWARD: Now, my question is,  
21 how is income eligibility being verified for  
22 students who receive a -- you know, pursuant  
23 to the DREAM Act? Is there an income  
24 eligibility check?

1                   HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Yeah. They  
2 self-report and fill out an affidavit  
3 specifying, if they have income, what that  
4 income is. And that's a provision that we  
5 provide within the application process. And  
6 so it's a self-reporting because there's no  
7 way of knowing whether they generate income  
8 or not. But we use that to determine  
9 eligibility.

10                  SENATOR SEWARD: So that's part of the  
11 application process, is what you're saying?

12                  HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Yes. Yes.

13                  SENATOR SEWARD: Can you share with us  
14 how many individuals have applied for  
15 financial aid because they qualify under the  
16 DREAM Act? How many students have applied  
17 for financial aid because they qualify?

18                  HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: The vast  
19 majority -- we anticipate, because we don't  
20 have the final numbers, because we are in the  
21 process of reviewing all of the applications.

22                  But we -- of those who complete all  
23 the requirements that they have, and after we  
24 have done the review of those, we find about

1           75 percent of those that we complete the  
2           review are found eligible for financial aid.

3                   SENATOR SEWARD: Thank you. No  
4           further questions.

5                   CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.  
6           Assembly.

7                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Assemblymember  
8           Pichardo.

9                   ASSEMBLYMAN PICHARDO: Good afternoon,  
10          EVP Magee and Dr. Linares {in Spanish}.

11                   So I just want to make sure, just out  
12          of curiosity, is there a sense or a way where  
13          we can -- this committee in our respective  
14          houses can receive the exact number of  
15          applications, the failure rate in terms of  
16          applications for both Excelsior and for the  
17          José Peralta DREAM Act, by any chance?

18                   HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Sure.

19                   ASSEMBLYMAN PICHARDO: Okay. We'd  
20          love to see those numbers. Because again, I  
21          know that -- first of all, sir, appreciate  
22          your service, and you and I both served with  
23          José. And, you know, if he wasn't around, if  
24          he wasn't here with us, he would be here

1 asking these same questions of us. So, you  
2 know, it's important that we make sure that  
3 this program is successful and that, if there  
4 is a slack of funding or a lack of funding,  
5 that we are able to make up the shortfall.

6 So in terms of just asking, what else  
7 do we need to make sure that every single  
8 eligible student that is eligible for not  
9 only Excelsior but for DREAM Act, that they  
10 get the word out? How else can we be helpful  
11 in that endeavor?

12 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: That's a very  
13 good question. Because, you know, as the  
14 original sponsor when I was in your chair of  
15 the DREAM Act in 2011, this program is close  
16 to my heart.

17 So my biggest fear, as we had it  
18 finally approved, thanks to you, is that the  
19 aggressiveness with which Washington is  
20 approaching particularly our state brings to  
21 higher levels the level of fear in many  
22 immigrant families and Dreamers. So that's  
23 why we were so aggressive in engaging trusted  
24 institutions across the state, knowing that a

1 large portion of undocumented families and  
2 students find themselves in the five boroughs  
3 and also Long Island, Westchester, but  
4 they're also present in other parts of the  
5 state. And engaging in a proactive way with  
6 those diverse institutions working with  
7 immigrant families was key and instrumental  
8 in approaching the number that we have  
9 received so far.

10 We have to continue to spread the  
11 word. And this is now a renewed effort that  
12 we're undertaking using all media that is  
13 accessible, TV, but by and large the ethnic  
14 media and also the community-based  
15 organizations across the state. Because the  
16 only way to address the fear factor is really  
17 to have the word of mouth but also trusted  
18 individuals and institutions.

19 And so having Dreamers know that when  
20 they provide information to us, it comes to  
21 us and it is highly confidential by law,  
22 federal and state, and that that information  
23 goes nowhere. The only connections we've  
24 made as an agency is to the institution where

1           they're attending to get a degree, for the  
2           purposes of providing the financial aid. And  
3           that alone goes a long way in them not being  
4           hesitant and concerned about applying when  
5           they're undocumented under these  
6           circumstances.

7                         So we are engaged in a campaign and  
8           using all those that can help us make sure  
9           that every Dreamer that's eligible to attend  
10          one of our universities has that opportunity  
11          without fear.

12                        ASSEMBLYMAN PICHARDO: Well, thank  
13          you. And again, I want to reiterate my point  
14          to you, Dr. Linares, that we would love to --  
15          if we can share those numbers with the  
16          committee. Just obviously the raw totals,  
17          not confidential information, just to see how  
18          we can continue to support Dream specifically  
19          and making sure that it's a successful  
20          program.

21                        And thank you for your time and your  
22          service.

23                        CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

24                        To the Senate, Robert Jackson.

1                   SENATOR JACKSON: Thank you, Madam  
2                   Chair.

3                   Dr. Guillermo Linares, let me thank  
4                   you for your leadership. Obviously we -- you  
5                   and I go back a long way. Community school  
6                   boards, fighting for the children in District  
7                   6. I remember loud and clear when parent  
8                   voters -- parents were allowed to vote even  
9                   if they were noncitizens. And we, along with  
10                  other community leaders, registered 10,000  
11                  parent voters to vote in school board  
12                  elections. And so --

13                  HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: In three  
14                  months.

15                  SENATOR JACKSON: Three months. So  
16                  you've been a fighter, and I think you're in  
17                  a great position to help students to access  
18                  higher education.

19                  I think you may have been here earlier  
20                  when I asked about looking at the budget as  
21                  far as the decrease in the Higher Education  
22                  Corporation's funding. Have you -- your  
23                  budget has been decreased, am I  
24                  understanding, yes or no?

1                   HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: I'm not aware  
2                   that that's the case. In fact, what my  
3                   understanding is that is -- there is an  
4                   increase in terms of the funding for the  
5                   programs that we administer. And in terms of  
6                   our operation as an agency, we're whole.

7                   SENATOR JACKSON: You're whole?

8                   HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Yes.

9                   SENATOR JACKSON: Okay. Because I  
10                  think it's so important that students have  
11                  the opportunity to go into higher education.  
12                  Obviously they indicate this is the  
13                  Empire State. Someone said to me, we need  
14                  this to be the progressive state,  
15                  that Governor Cuomo says he's progressive, so  
16                  let's call this a progressive state and make  
17                  sure that our children receive a progressive  
18                  education and not the opportunity for a  
19                  sound, basic education which is not being  
20                  funded -- which has been challenged in the  
21                  courts and we won. So obviously that's  
22                  important for me, and you know that.

23                  But with respect to your subject  
24                  area -- and I'm sorry I walked in late, I was

1           in conference dealing with the presentation  
2           on education. Can you tell me what effect,  
3           if any -- to the best of your knowledge, what  
4           effect does it have on children, students  
5           going into higher education if in fact they  
6           do not receive a good education? What effect  
7           does that have on them entering college and  
8           life beyond?

9                        HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Well, the  
10           Governor usually says that a college degree  
11           today is what 50 years ago a high school  
12           diploma was. And never in the history of our  
13           country has there been such an urgent need in  
14           getting a two- or a four-year degree and  
15           beyond for the workforce demands that we  
16           have. And earlier we had both CUNY and SUNY  
17           chancellors speaking to that.

18                       Sixty-five percent of the jobs that  
19           are most promising in terms of income when  
20           you hit the workforce require -- 65 percent  
21           require a college degree. And so we cannot  
22           afford, when we have a student enter the  
23           doors, to not to get to the finish line. So  
24           that's why one of the things that we're doing

1           now in a very aggressive way is to engage  
2           K-12 -- but I say to K to 3rd purposely  
3           because it is not engaging only the guidance  
4           counselors in the high school level, but if  
5           by fifth or sixth grade there has not been  
6           engagement with our young people about  
7           planning and expecting to attend college,  
8           it's too late. So we need to really engage  
9           K-12, but also engage other partners at the  
10          higher education level.

11                    SENATOR JACKSON: Sure. So with  
12          respect to your agency, what is the primary  
13          role of your agency as far as to help  
14          students get into college?

15                    HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: I am -- I am  
16          working -- when I arrived to my agency three  
17          years ago, I found that it did a very good  
18          job processing scholarships and grants and so  
19          forth. I have now engaged in trying to make  
20          the agency a service-oriented agency for  
21          students and families, and by extension  
22          communities, leveraging as much communication  
23          as possible, a strategy in communication  
24          leveraging the new technology that we have.

1                   We're having soon a director of  
2                   communication coming on board, because the  
3                   27 programs that we have to provide financial  
4                   aid and provide assistance to students -- the  
5                   information of those programs needs to be in  
6                   the hands of students and families. And they  
7                   need to be aware of what exists for them,  
8                   what's available to them, in order for us to  
9                   be fully successful.

10                   So it's shifting the agency to be  
11                   service-oriented to students and families,  
12                   working closely with very trusted and strong  
13                   partners that we have -- CUNY, SUNY, the  
14                   private colleges --

15                   CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Guillermo, I'm  
16                   going to cut you off so that the Assembly can  
17                   ask you more questions.

18                   SENATOR JACKSON: Thank you, Madam  
19                   Chair. Thank you, Dr. Linares.

20                   CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you. Thank  
21                   you.

22                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Assemblymember  
23                   Ra.

24                   ASSEMBLYMAN RA: Good afternoon,

1 Dr. Linares. Good to see you.

2 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Good to see  
3 you.

4 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: I just have a quick  
5 question, and if you don't have this  
6 information, perhaps you can get it to us.  
7 But last year there was a new kind of small  
8 scholarship that was put into the budget, the  
9 Child Welfare Worker Incentive Scholarship  
10 and the Child Welfare Worker Loan Forgiveness  
11 Program, which was designed as, you know, an  
12 incentive to an industry that's having a lot  
13 of trouble with recruitment and retention of  
14 staff.

15 And if you'd be able to get us some  
16 information just in terms of -- you know,  
17 they're looking to expand that; I think  
18 there's a need there. But just in terms of  
19 how many people have participated in these  
20 programs, how many have applied for these  
21 programs, just to get a real sense of what  
22 the demand is for those programs.

23 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Be glad to  
24 send you that information.

1 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: Okay, thank you.

2 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

3 Continuing with the Assembly.

4 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Assemblymember  
5 Simon.

6 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Thank you.

7 Good afternoon. I have a couple of  
8 questions that really go to TAP and our use  
9 of TAP. Obviously there's the TAP gap that  
10 we've been talking about, but I'm also  
11 concerned about part-time TAP and --  
12 part-time TAP and how our policies require  
13 students to be a full-time student for a year  
14 before they can access part-time TAP, instead  
15 of the other way around.

16 Because we know so many students start  
17 school -- and often in community colleges it  
18 is the entryway for 75 percent of students  
19 with disabilities, is to begin their college  
20 careers, postsecondary careers in a community  
21 college, and they are pretty much foreclosed  
22 from taking advantage of TAP if they are  
23 starting out part-time.

24 Can you give me some sense of the

1 decision-making behind that and what you're  
2 doing to look at that issue?

3 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Well, I'm  
4 going to ask Elsa to respond to this specific  
5 question, but we also have the part-time  
6 scholarship that we just initiated, right,  
7 which complements those students who need  
8 financial aid to -- because they attend  
9 part-time.

10 HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: But specific to  
11 students with disabilities, they do not need  
12 to meet the full-time requirement to receive  
13 TAP. So for any student who has a disability  
14 under the Americans with Disabilities Act,  
15 they -- it doesn't matter whether they start  
16 off part-time or they can enroll for 12  
17 credits, they are always eligible for TAP.  
18 And we'll just prorate so that they continue  
19 to receive the award while they're in  
20 attendance at school.

21 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: And I know there  
22 had been an issue where they would be  
23 foreclosed after four years if they needed  
24 additional years, and that has been fixed.

1                   HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: That would be  
2                   prorated so they'd get it for as many years  
3                   as they --

4                   HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: That's the  
5                   way it works for Excelsior also.

6                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: But outside of  
7                   students with disabilities, there are still  
8                   plenty of students who start off in community  
9                   colleges who can't access TAP unless they go  
10                  full-time for a year.

11                  HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: But as  
12                  Dr. Linares said, for students we do have the  
13                  part-time scholarship program for students  
14                  attending a SUNY or CUNY college, where they  
15                  can continue to take anywhere from three to  
16                  11 credits, and they can receive \$3,000 under  
17                  that program.

18                  And then there's also the Aid for  
19                  Part-Time Studies Program, where there's  
20                  \$14 million available, and that's  
21                  administered by the college directly as well,  
22                  for part-time students.

23                  ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: And how do  
24                  students find out about this? How do

1 students find out about this?

2 HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: The colleges --

3 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: The availability  
4 of these programs, how are they communicated  
5 to students? Because -- and obviously if  
6 they're beginning -- you know, how is that  
7 information getting down to the high schools,  
8 for example, to help parents to know that  
9 this is a resource available to their  
10 children?

11 HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: I think,  
12 interestingly, we don't typically market  
13 part-time programs to high school guidance  
14 counselors. But we can begin doing that,  
15 certainly.

16 The schools -- we work directly with  
17 financial aid officers, and they tend to  
18 be -- because the students are there in their  
19 offices. They know about our programs, and  
20 they're usually the ones -- they administer  
21 the Aid for Part-Time Study Program right on  
22 their campuses. So they're usually the ones,  
23 when they see that a student is part-time and  
24 meets the eligibility requirements, they make

1 the students aware of those requirements.

2 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: And how many  
3 students have accessed that part-time  
4 scholarship program?

5 HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: Part-time  
6 scholarship? I'd have to get you the actual  
7 numbers.

8 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Thank you. I'd  
9 be interested in learning more about that.

10 Thank you.

11 HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: Sure.

12 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

13 Assembly continues.

14 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Assemblymember  
15 Fahy to close.

16 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Thank you.

17 Thank you, Dr. Linares, it's good to  
18 see you here, former colleague. And thank  
19 you for all your service here and at HESC.

20 I want to share -- just briefly share  
21 the concerns about the expansion of TAP and  
22 the serious and growing need for TAP. So I  
23 just -- I'm not going to reiterate some of  
24 the comments, but even the part-time TAP I

1 know is something very much in demand. So  
2 thank you for all you can do to try to  
3 address that, as well as the demand across  
4 the board for the financial aid.

5 I have a smaller question, and happy  
6 to follow up with you on it. The master's  
7 and teachers program, it's a bill that I've  
8 had the last few years to try to expand that.  
9 And if I understand correctly, it's -- the  
10 number of scholarships awarded for that  
11 master's and teachers program has kind of  
12 held steady, I think it's allocated at \$5  
13 million. It hasn't broken a million dollars.  
14 And yet, as you know, we have a very serious  
15 teacher shortage, and I think it could be  
16 quite instrumental in helping teachers.

17 We've also added that not just public  
18 universities could access that, but private  
19 nonprofits could as well. Do you happen to  
20 know where -- it seems to be consistently  
21 around that 60 range. Do you know where --  
22 is it just that certain universities are  
23 marketing it better, or is there something  
24 that we can do to increase those numbers,

1 given that we haven't even broken the million  
2 dollars, yet we know there's a need for those  
3 master's degrees?

4 HESC EXEC VP MAGEE: We have not  
5 really focused so far. But as Dr. Linares  
6 said, we are getting a new communications  
7 director in, and this is one of the programs  
8 where we really want to work with SUNY and  
9 CUNY at their colleges that are educating our  
10 teachers, to make sure that the students do  
11 know about it, because we do know that we can  
12 award 500 each year, and we're not at that  
13 mark yet.

14 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Yes, that's  
15 right, up to 500, and I think it's allocated  
16 at 5 million, yet we're in and around the 60  
17 range.

18 Again, I have the bill to try to  
19 expand that to make sure that we are using  
20 those monies, given the critical shortages.  
21 I welcome the opportunity to follow up with  
22 you to see which schools are using it, and  
23 maybe it's somewhat of a marketing issue, as  
24 well as I would contend an expansion of that

1 program.

2 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Yeah. Part  
3 of what we want to do is really raise  
4 awareness of all of the programs that we  
5 have, whether it is Get Off Your Feet or this  
6 particular program, just to raise awareness  
7 about them that they are there to take  
8 advantage of, and this is a big priority.

9 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Thank you. Thank  
10 you. Thank you, Chair.

11 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you. Thank  
12 you very much for your testimony here today.

13 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Thank you.

14 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: You are now free.

15 (Laughter.)

16 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Thank you.

17 (Discussion off the record.)

18 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Next up,  
19 Andrew Pallotta, NYSUT president, along with  
20 Frederick Kowal, president of United  
21 University Professions, and Barbara Bowen,  
22 president of Professional Staff Congress.  
23 And there might be a fourth -- Alithia Rolon,  
24 NYSUT legislative director.

1                   Good afternoon.

2                   MR. PALLOTTA: Good afternoon,  
3                   Chairperson Krueger, Chairperson Stavisky,  
4                   Chairperson Glick.

5                   I first commend you for your stamina.  
6                   This is amazing, and we've heard some great  
7                   testimony today.

8                   I am Andy Pallotta, president of  
9                   New York State United Teachers. We represent  
10                  600,000-plus members around the state  
11                  involved in education and healthcare. Thank  
12                  you for the opportunity to testify before you  
13                  today. I am joined by Fred Kowal, UUP  
14                  president, and also Barbara Bowen, president  
15                  of the PSC. They will testify today, and I  
16                  will make sure that I do not repeat too many  
17                  things that we've heard for the last day.

18                  So public higher education, as we all  
19                  know, provides a pathway out of poverty and  
20                  into the middle class for so many families  
21                  throughout New York State. We've heard how  
22                  many folks have gone through the system, and  
23                  I would start off by saying I went to  
24                  Kingsborough Community College and then

1 Brooklyn College for my master's in  
2 education.

3 When the state doesn't invest in  
4 public education, it's harmful to all of our  
5 students and our communities. Worse still,  
6 these effects most strongly impact low-income  
7 communities, and thus this impact is borne by  
8 those who can least afford to shoulder it.  
9 This year the Executive Budget once again  
10 holds SUNY and CUNY's instructional core  
11 budgets flat from last year. The negative  
12 impact of all this is too familiar to us and  
13 is felt by our students and the educators in  
14 the field.

15 When we refer to investment, we are  
16 asking the state to cover all mandatory  
17 costs, which include collective bargaining  
18 increases, energy and other inflationary  
19 costs, as well as tuition credit waivers.  
20 Without state funding to cover these rising  
21 costs, SUNY and CUNY are forced to absorb  
22 them, which often necessitates reductions in  
23 academic programs and student supports. We  
24 would like to thank you for continuing to

1 support the legislation that requires the  
2 state to reimburse all mandatory costs.

3 At this time I'll just discuss quickly  
4 about community colleges, and I thank you for  
5 your support for these campuses around the  
6 state. As you well know, community colleges  
7 educate and prepare students for the  
8 workforce and provide the necessary  
9 foundation for students moving on to  
10 four-year campuses and universities or into  
11 the workforce. They often collaborate with  
12 regional businesses and employers to develop  
13 and provide training to access specific local  
14 workforce needs.

15 The Executive Budget proposes flat  
16 funding per FTE for community colleges, which  
17 will likely force many campuses to raise  
18 tuition and/or eliminate programs and student  
19 services.

20 We believe now is the time to provide  
21 baseline funding to financially stabilize our  
22 campuses. Accordingly, we are asking for a  
23 base aid increase of \$250 per FTE and for  
24 SUNY community colleges. In addition to the



1           increase student access to public higher  
2           education, and we must focus on providing the  
3           funding to preserve and enhance the quality  
4           of the education offered by CUNY and SUNY.  
5           We understand that the table target typically  
6           allotted to higher education is limited and  
7           does not allow for new investments after  
8           funding is restored to programs such as  
9           student Opportunity Programs.

10                         Also, NYSUT is aggressively pursuing a  
11           campaign to secure stable revenue streams to  
12           fund the futures of our students. It is time  
13           to close the ever-widening gap between the  
14           haves and the have-nots. It is time to hold  
15           billionaires and ultra-millionaires  
16           accountable and demand that they pay their  
17           fair share in taxes. Funding generated from  
18           these revenue streams could be used to make  
19           much-needed improvements and investments in  
20           education and help reverse the years of flat  
21           funding and ensure that we are providing the  
22           students with a first-rate education.

23                         We have much polling to support the  
24           public support for taxation, and I will now

1 turn it over to Dr. Fred Kowal.

2 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Very well-timed.

3 MR. PALLOTTA: That was -- I practiced  
4 all day.

5 (Laughter.)

6 DR. KOWAL: Thank you, Chairperson  
7 Krueger, Chairperson Weinstein, Chairperson  
8 Stavisky, Chairperson Glick, members of the  
9 Senate Finance Committee, Assembly Ways and  
10 Means Committee, and the Higher Education  
11 Committees. I would like to thank you for  
12 the opportunity for United University  
13 Professions to testify on the 2021 Executive  
14 Budget for higher education.

15 My name is Dr. Fred Kowal, and I'm the  
16 president of UUP. And I do have the distinct  
17 honor and privilege of representing more than  
18 37,000 academic and professional faculty and  
19 staff doing their work across New York State  
20 at SUNY.

21 With regard to the Executive Budget  
22 proposal, quite simply, the Governor's  
23 proposed budget fails to provide the  
24 necessary funding for SUNY. The spending

1 plan is essentially flat, which will only  
2 make things worse for our cash-tight  
3 campuses. A 3 percent increase for public  
4 higher education is earmarked for the cost of  
5 state fringe benefits, an increase in capital  
6 bonded costs, and a planned expansion of the  
7 Excelsior Scholarship Program.

8 We heard a great deal this morning  
9 from the chancellor, Chancellor Johnson,  
10 concerning the need for philanthropic --  
11 philanthropy, sorry. I should have known how  
12 to pronounce it, I heard it so often.

13 As a state we must never, never become  
14 dependent on private sources of money to  
15 accomplish the important public mission of  
16 our state universities. This has never been  
17 more evident than in a newly proposed  
18 two-to-one capital construction matching  
19 program, a SUNY budget request proposal that  
20 was then incorporated in the Governor's  
21 proposal.

22 This proposal will divide SUNY  
23 campuses into groups of haves and have-nots:  
24 Campuses that can afford to access the

1 matching funds, and campuses that can't.  
2 This will create a vicious cycle. Campuses  
3 with private dollars will utilize the match  
4 and build impressive new buildings, hopefully  
5 attracting new students. Those that can't  
6 raise the funds will continue to deteriorate  
7 and see their enrollments decline. A system  
8 will result that will become more and more  
9 tuition-dependent, and these campuses will  
10 fall further and further behind.

11 We are not a quasi-public higher  
12 education system. We are the State  
13 University of New York, a public higher  
14 education system. The time has come to  
15 remind and continue to remind the Chancellor  
16 and the Governor that these are their  
17 campuses, their hospitals, but at the same  
18 time, this is the people's SUNY. We are a  
19 system, not a collection of franchisees.

20 We have heard a great deal  
21 specifically in terms of funding about the  
22 TAP gap. The TAP gap in fact is a major  
23 burden for our campuses. Allow me to share  
24 with you a couple of specific cases as to how

1 the TAP gap has impacted, for instance, the  
2 campus at Plattsburgh, which is suffering  
3 right now under a \$3 million deficit. The  
4 TAP gap there in the last year was slightly  
5 over \$2 million. If it is addressed, that  
6 would diminish deeply the gap that that  
7 campus faces.

8 My home campus of Cobleskill has a  
9 \$2 million deficit. Its TAP gap is  
10 approximately \$1 million. Again, a long way  
11 to solving the budget problems facing our  
12 campuses could be achieved by addressing the  
13 TAP gap.

14 I would be remiss if I did not share  
15 with you the serious situation facing the  
16 SUNY hospitals. Once again, the Governor has  
17 chosen to propose a budget that includes no  
18 money in what is referred to as the "SUNY  
19 subsidy." We need to recall that when a  
20 patient comes to a SUNY hospital or an  
21 academic medical center, regardless of that  
22 individual's ability to pay, the color of  
23 that person's skin, the country of that  
24 person's origin, the level of that person's

1 education, all will receive the best care  
2 possible anywhere.

3           However, when we look at what has  
4 happened over the last couple of years in  
5 terms of the subsidy, there have been direct  
6 impacts on patient care in the hospitals.  
7 Just this past week -- today, as a matter of  
8 fact, I received word from our chapter  
9 president at Upstate Medical University that  
10 in one of the trauma care centers there was a  
11 leak in the ceiling which was taken care of  
12 by the use of a trash bag and a trash barrel  
13 to catch the water.

14           There is such a demand for the trauma  
15 and emergency room services at Upstate that  
16 patients are being kept in physical therapy  
17 gymnasiums and in the hallways. This is  
18 totally unsafe, while at the same time  
19 undermining, for instance, HIPAA requirements  
20 that these institutions must follow.

21           The hospitals need the subsidy, we  
22 need to support them, it is part of the  
23 central core mission of SUNY. And that  
24 mission calls on all of us to be committed to

1 building a better future for our students and  
2 our state.

3 Thank you very much.

4 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

5 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: You're knocking  
6 it out of the park on the timing.

7 MR. PALLOTTA: Professors.

8 (Laughter.)

9 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: It's a high  
10 mark -- a high bar now, Barbara.

11 (Laughter.)

12 DR. BOWEN: I'll try. I'll try.

13 Good afternoon -- almost good  
14 evening -- Senate Chairpersons Krueger and  
15 Stavisky and Assembly Chairperson Glick. And  
16 thank you all, those of you who are here,  
17 those of you who have been here for most of  
18 the time, for your time and your questions.

19 And also thank you for your support  
20 for CUNY, for the nearly half-million  
21 students we educate, and for the 30,000  
22 faculty and staff whom I represent.  
23 Legislators on both sides of the aisle have  
24 fought to increase funding in the past for

1 community colleges, you've protected  
2 Opportunity Programs year after year, and  
3 you've understood the need to stabilize the  
4 public funding for CUNY and SUNY senior  
5 colleges, and we thank you for that.

6 I'm proud to be here with my  
7 colleagues and also two colleagues from the  
8 PSC, Andrea Vásquez and Mike Fabricant. We  
9 deeply appreciate, the PSC, your efforts to  
10 increase funding for CUNY and your support  
11 last year -- and the Governor's support --  
12 for the PSC's landmark contract that we just  
13 settled. And you've heard quite a bit about  
14 it.

15 But I need to tell you that CUNY  
16 cannot withstand another year of New York  
17 State's current funding policy. New York's  
18 policy on CUNY funding is planned poverty,  
19 impoverishment by design. State budgets that  
20 consistently fail to cover even mandatory  
21 costs and collective bargaining increases  
22 amount to a policy of sabotaging CUNY and  
23 sabotaging CUNY students. There's no other  
24 way to say that. Not everyone here today has

1           said that. But year after year of  
2           underfunding adds up to a policy. And that  
3           policy is deliberate underfunding for the  
4           students we teach and the students we love.

5                        So to make up for missing state  
6           funding, CUNY either cuts resources or  
7           increases tuition or both. Neither approach  
8           is acceptable or sustainable. Incremental  
9           cuts and flat budgets may look innocuous, but  
10          repeated year after year, they amount to a  
11          policy of destroying the university's  
12          capacity to provide the education and support  
13          CUNY students need. On a per-student  
14          basis -- and I don't think you've heard this  
15          yet in all the statistics -- on a per-student  
16          basis, state funding for FTE students,  
17          adjusted for inflation, for CUNY senior  
18          colleges, has declined by 21 percent in the  
19          last decade alone.

20                       How is a university supposed to  
21          continue to educate students when operating  
22          funds have been cut by more than a fifth, if  
23          one in five students cannot get into a class  
24          needed for graduation, if college libraries

1           have to close one day in five, if one in five  
2           full-time faculty positions is cut, if every  
3           advisor is responsible for hundreds more  
4           students, if buildings are dilapidated, roofs  
5           leak, rats and mold endanger the classroom,  
6           and students have to navigate around buckets  
7           catching rainwater as they try to make their  
8           way to class?

9                         That any state would allow or even  
10           cause such shortfalls is regrettable, and I  
11           would say shameful. But it's especially so  
12           here in New York. This state prides itself  
13           on leading the nation in progressive policy,  
14           and in many areas it does. The Legislature,  
15           you showed last year that you could do things  
16           against the odds, you made breathtaking  
17           changes in policy. But in fiscal support for  
18           public higher education, that has yet to  
19           happen. New York is far from a progressive  
20           leader. It's actually failing CUNY students.

21                         The consequences are heaviest for  
22           those least able to bear them. And you've  
23           heard about our students today, and we can  
24           say more later. And we know that you stand

1 with us, and you have stood with us. But  
2 this year we're asking for a higher level of  
3 commitment because nothing else will serve.

4 So we are calling on you to make sure  
5 that full funding for CUNY's essential needs  
6 is a priority -- one of the few priorities in  
7 your conference -- and that the leaders of  
8 each house take a stand in favor of the new  
9 revenue necessary to achieve it. We ask you  
10 to refuse to pass a budget -- I know this is  
11 a heavy lift -- refuse to pass a budget  
12 unless it includes new revenue from  
13 progressive taxation and covers CUNY's basic  
14 operating costs without raising tuition.

15 So the requests that we've made you've  
16 seen in our written material; they  
17 concentrate on funding the unmet mandatory  
18 needs. The basic year-to-year costs of our  
19 contract are not funded yet. The chancellor  
20 mentioned that he hopes that they will be  
21 funded in the final budget. We hope they  
22 will. But basic contract increases.

23 Filling the TAP gap. That is a gap at  
24 every college -- \$8 million at Hunter,

1           \$7 million at John Jay. Each of those  
2           places, the more students of economic need  
3           the college accepts, the more they are  
4           punished. That is a structural deficit; it  
5           should be removed.

6                     We call on you to restore the  
7           legislative funding that you generously put  
8           in last year to increase the community  
9           college base aid. And let me just mention  
10          again this must be done without raising  
11          tuition. The tuition increase generates  
12          \$36 million. The state should put that  
13          public money into a public university, should  
14          not extend the authorization for endless  
15          tuition increases.

16                    And we certainly stand with UUP on the  
17          issue of capital. It should not be based on  
18          private funding match.

19                    Thank you very much.

20                    CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

21                    First up, chair of Higher Ed for the  
22          Assembly, Deborah Glick.

23                    ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Thank you very  
24          much.

1                   We -- you know, those of us who are  
2                   here and many who are in session now  
3                   understand that the issue of the TAP gap is a  
4                   very -- it's not going to get fixed in a  
5                   year. We would like to see a plan to  
6                   eliminate it in a shorter period of time.

7                   But you've mentioned the collective  
8                   bargaining costs, which fall to each campus.  
9                   Do we have a figure for what needs to be  
10                  added to cover that cost?

11                  DR. BOWEN: CUNY gives a cost in their  
12                  breakdown of mandatory costs that are unmet,  
13                  and I'd rather use their figure since they've  
14                  worked it up. And it can be divided by  
15                  campus. And they give a figure for this  
16                  year. But the increases across the board  
17                  were the same ones that the state has  
18                  insisted on, I'll say, for the other unions,  
19                  a 2 percent increase.

20                  But we were able to do a much bigger  
21                  increase for adjuncts because of two things.  
22                  We redistributed some of that money, and also  
23                  we do have support from the Governor's  
24                  office -- which is very important -- and from

1 the Mayor of New York City to pay adjuncts  
2 for hundreds of thousands of additional  
3 office hours, time with students. So that  
4 cost we're expecting to be funded in. And  
5 that's not visible on CUNY's sheet.

6 DR. KOWAL: And we're in the --  
7 presently in the fourth year of our  
8 collective bargaining agreement. And  
9 similarly, we got the 2 percent increases.  
10 We also have had new minimum salaries  
11 established for adjuncts, and they go up  
12 every fall semester.

13 However, calculating what that is,  
14 again, I would take the same tack as my  
15 colleague Dr. Bowen, and that is I would  
16 depend on SUNY's number because we don't know  
17 how many of the adjuncts will be in the  
18 workforce and in our bargaining unit when  
19 those increases go through. So the  
20 calculation can be a little tricky.

21 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: This is a more  
22 abstract question. We've heard that, you  
23 know, there are literally millions of  
24 New Yorkers who have gotten their education,

1 as I did, from CUNY or SUNY at a very  
2 reasonable cost. They're out there. The  
3 systems are in an awkward position to reach  
4 out to alumni and say "Write to the Governor  
5 and say there's not enough money," even  
6 though I wish they would. But, you know,  
7 they send me a very lovely little note that,  
8 you know, it was nice of you to go to Queens  
9 College, can you send us a check? And it's  
10 like, I can, I will, but you're not going to  
11 get very far on it, so.

12 But I do think that we have missed the  
13 boat on reaching out and having a concerted  
14 effort to reach out to alumni and ask them to  
15 participate. Maybe through, you know, some  
16 of your organizations you have some folks who  
17 have come through the systems. But you're  
18 located everywhere, and there should be some  
19 thought given to how we can harness and do an  
20 outreach program together -- I'm more than  
21 willing to participate in that -- in order to  
22 get people to speak up. I don't want to hear  
23 from somebody who's a very lovely individual,  
24 who's an ophthalmologist and I'm sure is

1 making a very good living, coming to me  
2 personally and saying, You have to save SUNY.  
3 And I've said back, I'm glad you've gone on  
4 for, you know, all of this additional  
5 training and education, but maybe you're the  
6 one who should be pointing out to the powers  
7 that be above me that you, in fact, are  
8 successful in paying your taxes at a higher  
9 rate because of this education.

10 So I know I'm speaking to the choir,  
11 but we haven't done it.

12 DR. BOWEN: I have an idea, if I may.  
13 I would love to work together. As the union,  
14 we have access, of course, to the addresses  
15 and emails of our members, but we don't to  
16 the alumni. The colleges have not shared  
17 those addresses. If they'd be willing to  
18 share them with you in a respectful,  
19 non-badgering collective effort to stand for  
20 CUNY, we would love to do that. We do  
21 collect alumni names when we can, and we  
22 reach out to people. One in 16 New Yorkers  
23 is a CUNY student right now -- and then think  
24 of how that multiplies with graduates and

1 workers. You know, every subway car you get  
2 on, there are probably eight people who are  
3 involved with CUNY.

4 So we would love to partner with you,  
5 and I say this quite seriously. It's a  
6 brilliant idea, and perhaps there's a way  
7 with the Legislature that would be respectful  
8 of people's privacy and not intrusive that we  
9 could draw on that very wide network of  
10 people who love this university. I mean, it  
11 changes lives. There are so many people who  
12 say: CUNY made my life, CUNY saved me. They  
13 should be a strong force with us. And I  
14 would love to partner with you in an  
15 appropriate way to do that.

16 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Thank you.

17 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

18 Senator Toby Stavisky, Higher Ed chair  
19 in the Senate.

20 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

21 As I was sitting here at the hearing  
22 this morning at 10:01 a.m., my email came in  
23 and it said "This is the weekend to be in  
24 Syracuse, Toby," and it tells me all the

1 reasons. And at the bottom it says, "Make a  
2 gift." Enough said. Let me get to my  
3 questions.

4 We've been hearing a great deal about  
5 the TAP gap. Are there any structural  
6 changes in the governance of CUNY and SUNY  
7 that we should look at to avoid this -- to  
8 mitigate, perhaps, some of the effects of the  
9 TAP gap?

10 DR. KOWAL: I would offer a couple of  
11 different ideas on that. I think it's an  
12 important question.

13 One of the problems at SUNY, and it  
14 has grown to be, I think, a very serious  
15 problem, is that -- and I use the term  
16 franchisees. Unfortunately, SUNY seems to be  
17 less and less of a system than a collection  
18 of semi-independent colleges that are left on  
19 their own.

20 And so the cases that I highlighted --  
21 and that was just a couple, in the interests  
22 of time. These campuses are out there on  
23 their own dealing with, you know, enrollment  
24 challenges, in part because of where they're

1           located, far upstate, and then secondly  
2           because of the structure of the TAP program.  
3           And they take a lot of TAP students, a lot of  
4           our upstate campuses do, and they are also  
5           the ones that are suffering the most.

6                         What we find is within SUNY, instead  
7           of there being a collective effort to address  
8           the structure of the TAP program so that we  
9           get rid of the ceiling in terms of what  
10          campuses get for full TAP awardees and all  
11          TAP awardees, there is instead, you know, a  
12          situation literally where campuses, if they  
13          fall into financial difficulty, are offered  
14          the opportunity to take loans from the  
15          system.

16                        I don't understand that. SUNY is not  
17          a bank. SUNY is one university system. And  
18          if there are campuses or the system has the  
19          resources, then it must be used to assist  
20          those campuses who are taking more TAP  
21          students, more full-award TAP students, which  
22          means the students who can least afford to go  
23          to SUNY. And they're doing the good work,  
24          and they should be rewarded for that and not

1           punished.

2                        So that would be the initial thing in  
3           terms of this structure that's become far too  
4           decentralized.  And with SUNY, with this  
5           laissez-faire approach, until the campuses  
6           become really troubled economically or  
7           financially and then SUNY steps in and says,  
8           Well, if you want a loan, we will give you a  
9           loan.  That is not how the SUNY system ought  
10          to operate.

11                      DR. BOWEN:  I would just add, if I  
12          may, that I think the main problem is -- at  
13          least as far as CUNY is concerned, is not in  
14          the governance of the university but in the  
15          structure of the law itself, which mandates  
16          that the students don't pay the cost above  
17          the maximum TAP award but the colleges absorb  
18          that cost, which is about \$2,000 a person.

19                      And so really it's the law that needs  
20          to change.  The consequence I'm sure was  
21          unintended, and it's punishing the colleges  
22          for each student they take who's on a TAP or  
23          Excelsior award, and all the new DREAM Act  
24          students.  So it was not the intended

1 consequence, and I think it really needs to  
2 be changed.

3 And I would also suggest that before  
4 the state considers an extension of the SUNY  
5 2020 ability to raise tuition \$200 every year  
6 in advance of the 2025 version, that we look  
7 at TAP. And that the tuition-granting  
8 authority to raise tuition should not be  
9 permitted, should not be incorporated this  
10 year. It should be done -- we think it  
11 should not be done at all, and it certainly  
12 shouldn't be done as a stand-alone before the  
13 rest of the law comes in.

14 MR. PALLOTTA: And this had been only  
15 an issue for the four-year campuses, and now  
16 the community colleges are also seeing the  
17 same thing. Because state support is  
18 25 percent; it should be 40 percent. And the  
19 students are putting in more.

20 SENATOR STAVISKY: One quick question.  
21 Actually, I have another. Two quick  
22 questions.

23 The contract that was just signed  
24 by -- fortunately just signed and ratified by

1 Professional Staff Congress, are there any  
2 suggestions in terms of the payment or  
3 coverage for the mandated costs as well as  
4 some of the other costs, the rentals and --  
5 you know, and the maintenance of effort, if  
6 you --

7 DR. BOWEN: Certainly the union -- the  
8 PSC and CUNY administration are united in  
9 calling for those costs to be covered. That  
10 is the cost across the board of across the  
11 board increases.

12 And in the past, what the colleges  
13 have had to do is sequester 2 percent out of  
14 their budgets to cover that anticipated cost.  
15 That means that something is being cut, or  
16 else tuition is being imposed, an increase --

17 SENATOR STAVISKY: That's my point.

18 DR. BOWEN: That is not fair. We --  
19 the purpose of our contract was not to raise  
20 students' tuition. We are in solidarity with  
21 them.

22 Nor is it to cut another program,  
23 because the benefit of your raise is  
24 diminished if then you come to your

1 department and find that you have no Xerox  
2 paper and you can't hire anyone. You don't  
3 feel so -- that your raise is so valuable  
4 when your working conditions every day are  
5 sabotaging your work.

6 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

7 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Assembly.

8 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Assemblymember  
9 Epstein.

10 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: I want to really  
11 thank you all for highlighting some of the  
12 structural problems we have here and really  
13 advocating to deal with the TAP gap and raise  
14 the TAP payment for students.

15 I wanted to focus on a different  
16 topic, because we've heard a lot around  
17 mental health services for students and the  
18 dire need that we see students placed in, and  
19 the ration that currently exists. Can you  
20 tell us what's going on on campuses and what  
21 you're hearing from students around the lack  
22 of adequate mental health services and what  
23 impact that's having on our students across  
24 the state?

1 DR. KOWAL: Well, I would just  
2 basically share two things.

3 One is with the -- certainly with the  
4 economic stress that students are under,  
5 these issues have become more and more  
6 severe. We have heard, through the course of  
7 today, the electronic communication system  
8 for counseling, well, that's based at  
9 Upstate. And the amount of the money that is  
10 budgeted for that is only \$700,000. The  
11 number of calls they get, you know, it's off  
12 the chart.

13 And so again, the lack of funding  
14 becomes a problem. And if we are serious in  
15 ensuring that students have the best possible  
16 setting for their education and for their  
17 lives, there needs to be a greater investment  
18 for that sort of resource.

19 DR. BOWEN: The national accrediting  
20 organization on psychological mental health  
21 counselors recommends at college a ratio of  
22 one counselor to 1,000 students, assuming  
23 that students have other forms of support --  
24 one to a thousand.

1                   At CUNY the current ratio is one to  
2                   2,700. So I think that tells a story.

3                   Then add to that the fact that most of  
4                   our students suffer tremendous odds,  
5                   encounter tremendous odds. And of course the  
6                   biggest stressor, one of -- the biggest,  
7                   certainly, material stressor of all is  
8                   poverty. So we strongly support the premise  
9                   that there should be more mental health  
10                  counselors.

11                  But the union opposes the way that  
12                  CUNY has proposed to address that, which is a  
13                  kind of ironic imposition of a mental health  
14                  and wellness fee, an additional \$120 fee,  
15                  that many students simply can't afford to  
16                  pay. And when one of the biggest stressors  
17                  is poverty, together with, you know, working  
18                  at low-wage jobs, being a parent, the  
19                  constant racism in our society -- and then to  
20                  address it, you add a fee -- that's not the  
21                  appropriate way to address it. So we need  
22                  to -- the state needs to step up and invest  
23                  there.

24                  ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Well, thank you

1           for saying that. I agree that the fees  
2           aren't appropriate, and there are so many  
3           fees -- book fees, miscellaneous fees that  
4           TAP doesn't cover and students have to pay  
5           out of pocket. I think if we move towards  
6           reducing those fees, that would be great.

7                     I know I'm out of time, but I want to  
8           ask you about looking for dedicated funding  
9           streams for CUNY and SUNY, what you think  
10          about having dedicated streams of funding  
11          that could go directly to our public higher  
12          education system.

13                    DR. KOWAL: I think that Barbara put  
14          it best, in terms of the necessity for us to  
15          address the revenue side. If we are  
16          committed to a public good, which is what  
17          public higher education is, then the society  
18          must invest. And right now we have the  
19          resources to do it. It's just a matter of  
20          making sure that the instruments are put in  
21          place. And it's over time, it's past time  
22          for this to be done.

23                    CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

24                    Senator Robert Jackson, I didn't ask

1           you in advance, but I bet I know you do have  
2           a question.

3                     SENATOR JACKSON:  And you're right.

4                     CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER:  I know you very  
5           well.

6                     (Laughter.)

7                     CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER:  Senator Robert  
8           Jackson.

9                     SENATOR JACKSON:  Thank you.

10                    So very quick, I understand that  
11           there's been no increase in the budget this  
12           year compared to last year.  So when it talks  
13           about maintenance of effort, is there enough  
14           money to run your programs and give all of  
15           the raises that educators rightfully deserve?  
16           Can you do that, in your opinion, without  
17           cutting back on staff and cutting back on  
18           programs?

19                    DR. BOWEN:  I'm not in charge of that,  
20           but my answer would be no.  The budget is  
21           essentially flat.  There's an increase in the  
22           fringe benefits part of the fringe benefit  
23           increase; \$24.3 million is covered.  There  
24           are some other increases the chancellor spoke

1           about to a program here and there. Those are  
2           all good.

3                     But when the costs of rent and  
4           electricity that go up, when other licensing  
5           costs go up and are not covered, and when a  
6           2 percent increase across the board for  
7           30,000 people is not covered, that money has  
8           got to come from somewhere.

9                     SENATOR JACKSON: So how much more  
10          money would you need in the budget -- I think  
11          in your testimony you said you needed --

12                    DR. BOWEN: Right, we said 208 million  
13          for unmet mandatory needs and the TAP gap at  
14          the senior colleges. Just the unmet  
15          mandatory needs, the way that CUNY management  
16          puts them together, I think they have  
17          126 million. So it's --

18                    SENATOR JACKSON: And that's just to  
19          meet CUNY.

20                    DR. BOWEN: Just CUNY. And that  
21          doesn't cover the community college base aid.  
22          This is a -- so for the community colleges,  
23          another 25 million.

24                    SENATOR JACKSON: And with respect to

1           SUNY -- when the chancellor for CUNY was  
2           there, he talked about people in the district  
3           that were employees or graduated from CUNY.  
4           Well, there are four members of my family  
5           that have graduated from SUNY -- three from  
6           SUNY New Paltz and one from the University at  
7           Buffalo.

8                         So with respect to the SUNY budget,  
9           how does that impact, from your perspective  
10          as the president of UUP, with respect to your  
11          staff?

12                        DR. KOWAL:  It's incredibly difficult  
13          to see any kind of optimistic future, I hate  
14          to say it, when I travel across the state.  
15          And I have visited all of the campuses many  
16          times, as the chancellor has said she has  
17          visited the campuses.  I hope she's listening  
18          to what people are saying, because campuses  
19          are suffering.  They have budgets that are  
20          requiring, even at the university centers, to  
21          have hiring freezes?  There is not enough  
22          money to pay the necessary costs.

23                        And when you look at the SUNY  
24          hospitals, as I described the situation just

1 at Upstate -- and Upstate is in good shape  
2 financially -- there is a real danger in  
3 terms of services not being done and, in  
4 terms of the hospitals, lives endangered.  
5 That's the reality.

6 SENATOR JACKSON: So here's a question  
7 for both of you. And I only have 19 seconds.  
8 With respect to the TAP gap, if in fact the  
9 proposal to continue tuition increase through  
10 '24-'25, if that was eliminated and we freeze  
11 it, what impact would that have on both CUNY  
12 and SUNY? That's my last question.

13 DR. BOWEN: It would freeze the amount  
14 of the TAP gap. Of course it's dependent on  
15 enrollment. But of course every time that  
16 the -- so it would freeze the amount of that.  
17 And the real solution, of course, is I would  
18 say to eliminate tuition. But certainly that  
19 would stop some of the growth.

20 SENATOR JACKSON: SUNY?

21 DR. KOWAL: Yeah, exactly. It would  
22 freeze the growth of the TAP gap. And that  
23 would be a help, but the gap would still  
24 remain in terms of lost resources.

1                   SENATOR JACKSON: Thank you.

2                   Thank you, Madam Chair.

3                   CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

4                   Assembly.

5                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Assemblymember

6                   Hyndman.

7                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Thank you,

8                   Chair.

9                   Just a quick question, because some of  
10                  my other questions were asked. For Andrew,  
11                  do you keep a number of how many of your  
12                  members are SUNY or CUNY grads?

13                  MR. PALLOTTA: Off the top of my head,  
14                  I don't know. And we certainly -- we could  
15                  certainly -- we don't because those records  
16                  would be kept by SUNY in their HR offices, so  
17                  we don't know where individual faculty  
18                  members, for instance, get their terminal  
19                  degrees or where they receive their  
20                  undergraduate --

21                  ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: No, it was  
22                  just along the lines of the questions that  
23                  Chairwoman Glick was asking about, you know,  
24                  making sure that the masses realize what's at

1 stake here.

2 I mean, I went to SUNY New Paltz --  
3 yay -- so I often get solicitations for --

4 MR. PALLOTTA: Right, when we're out  
5 in the halls of the Capitol and the LOB, we  
6 see the posters that say all these folks went  
7 to SUNY and all these folks went to CUNY. So  
8 we know that there's a lot out there, but we  
9 don't actually have that stat. That would be  
10 an interesting --

11 DR. KOWAL: We could survey members,  
12 but -- you know, and it's getting back to the  
13 earlier question. What I would like to see  
14 is for us to find those alumni of SUNY and  
15 those especially who are at the higher income  
16 levels and get them involved in a campaign  
17 where they exert pressure and say they are  
18 willing to pay more in taxes to support the  
19 public university system. I think that could  
20 go a long way to help as well.

21 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Thank you.

22 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Anyone else? I  
23 have just one question. So I'm reading a  
24 paper put out by the Center on Budget and

1 Policy Priorities, a well-respected liberal  
2 think tank, and it's showing me that all the  
3 states have cut funding for higher education  
4 over the last decade. But it's showing  
5 New York basically at the least cuts; we're  
6 like only down 2 percent.

7 So I'm wondering, besides the fact  
8 that we don't invest enough and we probably  
9 didn't 10 years ago either, are we spending  
10 it wrong? Because if you look at their data,  
11 we aren't doing as badly as most of the other  
12 50 states. So I'm really curious whether we  
13 also think that when we have the money, we're  
14 not using it correctly for our colleges.

15 DR. BOWEN: No, I think what has to be  
16 factored in there is TAP. We'd have to look  
17 carefully at those statistics because many of  
18 them put TAP as the Governor's budget does,  
19 put TAP right in there as an allocation. And  
20 also as the Governor's budget does, as you  
21 know, puts any authorization for an increase  
22 in tuition as an increase in the budget.

23 So you are great at reading these, so  
24 we should look at them together. Because TAP

1 is a program that covers many students:  
2 56,000 students at CUNY. New York has an  
3 unusual program with TAP -- remember, it goes  
4 to the private colleges and for-profit  
5 colleges as well as the public colleges. But  
6 that's where our spending is concentrated,  
7 and not in the operating budgets.

8 And that's why we're cutting classes.  
9 I mean, that's why at Queens College the  
10 semester began with telling them they'd have  
11 to cut a thousand seats out of basic English  
12 courses. I mean, we are hurting already, let  
13 along what would happen next year.

14 So I think we'd have to look at those  
15 figures and consider TAP in there.

16 DR. KOWAL: I think the other part of  
17 this is that some other states have just, you  
18 know, gone through some draconian cuts. We  
19 saw what happened at the University of  
20 Alaska, but other states where there have  
21 been massive cuts. And so, you know, if we  
22 set the bar low enough, then New York is  
23 going to look okay.

24 I think the other problem too is --

1           and we heard some pointed questions this  
2           morning concerning the issue of diversity in  
3           SUNY, in the faculty and staff specifically.  
4           One of the problems that we see all the time  
5           is because of the inability or the  
6           unwillingness of campuses to recruit and  
7           retain faculty members from communities of  
8           color -- and that means paying them  
9           competitive salaries because there's a great  
10          deal of demand across higher education for  
11          these highly skilled individuals. Which is  
12          why UUP has proposed taking the successful  
13          EOP program, providing a program like that  
14          specifically for medical education, to get  
15          more diversity into our medical schools and  
16          in the medical profession.

17                   And by the way, I just want to make  
18          that note as well. Though we are thankful  
19          that the Governor did not cut the Opportunity  
20          Programs this year, I for one am not going to  
21          celebrate that. I think that, you know,  
22          having four straight years of flat budgets in  
23          Opportunity Programs is not a good thing. I  
24          think that what's necessary is for those

1 programs to grow. They're very successful,  
2 and they help address the issue of access.

3 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you for all  
4 being with us here this afternoon.  
5 Appreciate it.

6 MR. PALLOTTA: Thank you.

7 DR. BOWEN: Thank you so much.

8 DR. KOWAL: Thank you.

9 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

10 All right. And our next is a panel of  
11 CUNY University Student Senate -- oh, I'm  
12 sorry, excuse me. Blair Horner, NYPIRG --  
13 thank you -- before we get to the panel. And  
14 there may also be Santana Alvarado --

15 MS. ALVARADO: Hello.

16 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Hello.

17 -- chairperson, NYPIRG. Sorry, I  
18 turned the page too quickly.

19 MR. HORNER: Ready?

20 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Yes, when you're  
21 ready.

22 MS. ALVARADO: Good afternoon. My  
23 name is Santana Alvarado, and I am the  
24 chairperson of the New York Public Interest

1           Research Group's Student Board of Directors  
2           and a City University of New York Hunter  
3           College student.

4                     With me today is Wali Ullah, a NYPIRG  
5           policy associate and a student at City  
6           College, as well as Blair Horner, NYPIRG's  
7           executive director.

8                     NYPIRG is a statewide nonpartisan,  
9           nonprofit organization founded by college  
10          students in 1973 to engage their peers in  
11          civic life. NYPIRG's broad programmatic work  
12          provides students with a range of  
13          opportunities to participate in public  
14          affairs and advance responses to social  
15          problems that matter most to them.

16                    Our board of directors consists of  
17          college and university students elected from  
18          the State University of New York, CUNY, and  
19          independent college campuses with NYPIRG  
20          chapters.

21                    Before I get into our testimony on  
22          behalf of NYPIRG, thank you so much for last  
23          year's approval of the Senator José Peralta  
24          DREAM Act. We worked closely with Senator

1 Peralta for years, and thank you for  
2 broadening financial aid eligibility to  
3 undocumented immigrant public college  
4 students.

5           You have our written testimony, and  
6 I'd like to underscore some recommendations  
7 for your consideration. In terms of tuition  
8 policy, as you will see in our testimony, the  
9 financial impact of New York's policy of  
10 annually increasing public college tuition  
11 has increased the costs of attending SUNY and  
12 CUNY by billions of dollars. Yet from  
13 anecdotal evidence that we've seen and heard,  
14 the state's commitment to maintain financial  
15 support has fallen far short.

16           As you will see in our testimony,  
17 public colleges across the state have  
18 reported declining services and cutbacks to  
19 meet the educational needs of students. In  
20 short, it looks like students are paying a  
21 lot more and not getting enhanced services.  
22 In fact, at least in some cases we are  
23 getting less. The clearest evidence of this  
24 problem is the TAP gap, which we urge you to

1 close.

2 Tuition hikes should be stopped.  
3 NYPIRG urges you to freeze college tuition  
4 rates and to reject the Governor's proposal  
5 for additional annual hikes for the next five  
6 years.

7 In terms of financial aid, as you will  
8 see in our testimony, there are a number of  
9 issues we would address. In our view, the  
10 most critical step that you can take is to  
11 modernize the state's TAP program. The  
12 current system creates campus-specific budget  
13 gaps resulting from the growing difference  
14 between the maximum TAP award and the  
15 mushrooming tuition costs.

16 In addition, deserving students, such  
17 as graduate students, have lost public  
18 support. TAP needs to be modernized to help  
19 today's college students to provide coverage  
20 for graduate and part-time students and  
21 incarcerated individuals, as well as other  
22 enhancements. Such changes will benefit both  
23 the public and independent sectors.

24 MR. ULLAH: We applaud the Governor's

1           proposal to maintain the funding levels for  
2           the state's various Opportunity Programs.  
3           Financial aid should, first and foremost,  
4           help low- and moderate-income college  
5           students and their families to make it  
6           through their studies.

7                     As you know, there has been an annual  
8           budget dance, so to speak, in which the  
9           Governor proposes less funding for  
10          Opportunity Programs and the Legislature adds  
11          it back in. But the result has been simply  
12          status quo funding -- essentially a cut, when  
13          factoring in inflation.

14                    The Governor's support for these  
15          programs is important. His plan opens the  
16          door to further enhancement of these  
17          incredibly successful efforts. Just a few  
18          observations from our written testimony.  
19          First-year retention, where a student  
20          re-enrolls for a second year, for SUNY senior  
21          college EOP students is 91 percent, whereas  
22          first-year retention students from the  
23          general student body at senior colleges in  
24          SUNY is approximately 84 percent.

1                   Secondly, the six-year graduation rate  
2                   for EOP students is 73 percent, whereas the  
3                   rate for non-EOP students at SUNY is 68  
4                   percent.

5                   Clearly these programs work, and they  
6                   deserve additional support. And SUNY's ASAP  
7                   should also be restored.

8                   MS. ALVARADO: NYPIRG urges you to  
9                   restore cuts to the community colleges.

10                  As you will see in our testimony, the  
11                  situation in CUNY and SUNY is dramatically  
12                  different. The City University of New York  
13                  has maintained low tuition and has a stable  
14                  community college system. SUNY community  
15                  colleges, on the other hand, have seen  
16                  plummeting enrollments and have had to hike  
17                  tuition in order to meet financial  
18                  obligations. The CUNY system should not be  
19                  penalized for its support and its efforts,  
20                  and the SUNY system needs help. We urge  
21                  restorations.

22                  In addition, we urge restorations to  
23                  SUNY and CUNY childcare programs, which are  
24                  vital to students.

1                   Lastly, we live in an era of rapid  
2                   climate changes which could easily lead to  
3                   climate catastrophe for the planet. We urge  
4                   and support the sustainability efforts in  
5                   both SUNY and CUNY as well as the independent  
6                   college sectors.

7                   Thank you for the opportunity to  
8                   testify.

9                   CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

10                  First up, Deborah Glick, Higher  
11                  Education, Assembly.

12                  ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: You've heard  
13                  that the TAP gap is an enormous amount of  
14                  money. It's not going to happen -- if we  
15                  were able to make adjustments, it would cost  
16                  something like \$50 million a year for several  
17                  years.

18                  Do you have thoughts about what -- how  
19                  the government should view eliminating that?

20                  MR. HORNER: Just to add, we talk  
21                  about in our testimony that the best way to  
22                  deal with it would be to restore the TAP  
23                  program. Prior to SUNY 2020, the deal was  
24                  when tuition went up, the maximum TAP award

1           went up, and you didn't have a TAP gap.

2                     And so if it ultimately comes down to  
3           that, that would be our preference, and  
4           certainly in the short term to fill the gap  
5           with student resources is one way to sort of  
6           deal with it, but it does turn into sort of  
7           an annual problem. And as tuition goes up,  
8           the gap gets bigger and the hit to the  
9           colleges gets bigger. And you've heard  
10          the -- all morning, all afternoon, and into  
11          the evening how the TAP gap causes problems  
12          on college campuses, and we document some of  
13          that in our testimony.

14                    But again, we think the best solution  
15          would be to just start dealing with the TAP  
16          program and do what it's supposed to do.

17                    ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: NYPIRG over the  
18          years has done a very effective job of  
19          raising awareness of issues, and thank you  
20          for doing that. And I've talked to some of  
21          my friends in labor about how do we reach out  
22          to alumni, and some of the students -- not  
23          all -- many of the students are first in  
24          their family to go to school, but they may

1 have neighbors who are not.

2 Do you have suggestions or thoughts  
3 about what we can do to raise awareness and  
4 activate alumni to take a more active role in  
5 advocating? Since you've obviously been able  
6 to get students engaged.

7 MS. ALVARADO: Right. So I'm  
8 graduating, upcoming in June, so I'll soon be  
9 an alumna. And I don't know, I feel  
10 personally on campus, as a student, there's a  
11 lot of isolation going on about what we can  
12 talk about and what we feel like we're going  
13 through alone versus other students.

14 And I feel like that would continue on  
15 into alumni realm. I feel like people are  
16 dealing with trauma from going to CUNY and  
17 SUNY. They're dealing with anxiety and  
18 they're dealing with not having college work  
19 out the way they thought it would in the  
20 economy as it changes and as, you know, the  
21 market changes and technology changes.

22 So I feel like engaging them on like  
23 how they actually felt about going to CUNY  
24 and SUNY, I think you'd be a little surprised

1           about what people say about the colleges that  
2           you all went to. And that shouldn't be --  
3           you know, you shouldn't just reach out to  
4           alumni to be like, Yo, we want to know what  
5           you have to say and we want your money -- we  
6           want to actually know how they felt and what  
7           they would have changed. Because we're  
8           encouraging students from high school to go  
9           to CUNY and SUNY, and are we going to still  
10          have those same problems when they graduate?

11                         So I think just meeting them heart to  
12          heart and saying, honestly, I'm sorry you had  
13          to go through what you went through when you  
14          were a student.

15                         MR. HORNER: Just --

16                         ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Do you have to  
17          prove that you have health insurance when you  
18          go to school?

19                         MS. ALVARADO: Yes? No, I don't  
20          believe I've had to prove that I've had  
21          health insurance. I also don't go to my  
22          campus at all to get any health services.

23                         ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Well, I'm just  
24          wondering that -- this institution of a fee

1           for mental health services was the latest  
2           little wrinkle. So I'm wondering whether or  
3           not students are being asked to pay a fee for  
4           which they already have coverage, and like  
5           what's that about.

6                       MR. HORNER: Again, we -- there's a  
7           lot of issues with various fees. I mean, as  
8           you know, under state law and federal law,  
9           people are covered up to the age of 26 and 29  
10          respectively, if their parents have insurance  
11          and they're willing to pay the rider to do  
12          it. If they're low-income, they're eligible  
13          for Medicaid.

14                      The fee is, you know, certainly from  
15          our view the kind of thing that should be  
16          coming out of tuition. And if you're going  
17          to have tuition, which we don't even like  
18          that either. But not that it would be a  
19          separate fee.

20                      So again, I defer to their experience  
21          in college. And I'm not, as you can tell.  
22          But in terms of sort of the structure of  
23          those issues, that's the way we'd look at it.

24                      Let me just mention one quick thing

1           about the alums. You asked the unions about  
2           it before. The tricky part is how do you get  
3           the list. And then in an organization,  
4           little organization like ours, how do you  
5           work through the students to get to build a  
6           list.

7                         What we have done in the past, which  
8           has been somewhat successful, is working with  
9           the community near the campus that benefits  
10          from the existence of it, in the same way as  
11          you would with any large employer. There's  
12          many, many, many small businesses. And  
13          because they're in a contained geographic  
14          area, it's easier to get to them than it is  
15          to a diffuse alum situation where, you know,  
16          people could be anywhere and it's hard to  
17          track them down and may be more expensive.

18                        So that's the way we've sort of tried  
19          to attack in terms of broadening the sort of  
20          the coalition effort around these issues, is  
21          to look at the various community elements  
22          that are connected to the campus itself and  
23          close enough by that you could get them  
24          activated. And they understand why it's

1 important.

2 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Thank you.

3 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Toby Stavisky,  
4 Senate Higher Ed.

5 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

6 I know NYPIRG very well, as Blair  
7 knows, and I know you not only are speaking  
8 for the college students, but you've also  
9 done a lot of work over the years in terms of  
10 environmental issues.

11 And how do you -- any suggestions for  
12 SUNY and CUNY and the independent colleges in  
13 terms of protecting our environment,  
14 sustainability issues?

15 MR. HORNER: Yeah, we offered some  
16 detailed testimony on that, I think it was  
17 last month or the month before. I'll gladly  
18 send it to you, Senator, in terms of these  
19 ideas. I mean, it's -- it's the -- I mean,  
20 when I talk to people on colleges, this is  
21 the single biggest thing they bring up  
22 because it's their future. If you believe  
23 science, their future is threatened.

24 And so it's the same across the board,

1 no matter what institution we're in, that's  
2 what you hear the most, is about climate  
3 change. And so we had specific suggestions  
4 reacting to I think the SUNY chancellor's  
5 ideas in the hearings that occurred, and I'm  
6 glad to get them to you.

7 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

8 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Assembly? Anyone  
9 else?

10 MR. HORNER: Could I just mention one  
11 quick thing before I go? Assemblymember  
12 Epstein brought up the questions about the  
13 breakdown in TAP. The HESC annual report  
14 which is out breaks it down very detailed in  
15 terms of numbers of recipients by sector, by  
16 how much money they get.

17 And there was an issue brought up  
18 about how many -- the percentage of people  
19 that benefit from the Excelsior program that  
20 apply. Syracuse.com put out an analysis a  
21 few months ago that showed about half of the  
22 people who applied for Excelsior get it, and  
23 of the remaining half, half of them do not  
24 get it for other reasons. So about a quarter

1 of the people who apply receive it.

2 And then we have some interesting data  
3 on Excelsior on page 12 of our testimony  
4 which looks at the current academic year and  
5 compares it to last year, to look at the  
6 numbers that might be useful in terms of your  
7 deliberations.

8 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you very  
9 much.

10 MS. ALVARADO: Thank you.

11 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Now we go to a  
12 panel of CUNY University Student Senate:  
13 Timothy Hunter, Nicole Agu, and Juvanie  
14 Piquant.

15 Hi. You're sharing five minutes, so  
16 make sure that you don't cut each other  
17 off -- or don't go on too long so that the  
18 other can't speak a little bit. Okay?

19 MS. PIQUANT: Good afternoon,  
20 everyone. Thank you, members of the Senate  
21 and Assembly. Thank you for holding this  
22 hearing. I see many --

23 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Hold the  
24 microphone a little closer.

1 MS. PIQUANT: I see many familiar  
2 faces. I'm pretty sure you know why we're  
3 here. But quite frankly, I don't think we  
4 should be here. We have classes, and we're  
5 missing class to go advocate for a quality  
6 and fully funded higher education, where I  
7 quite frankly think it's ridiculous. But  
8 allow me to divulge into the list of issues  
9 that we have over at CUNY.

10 My name is Juvanie Piquant. I am a  
11 sophomore at City Tech majoring in law and  
12 paralegal studies. But this journey hasn't  
13 been easy. I pay every single dollar out of  
14 my own pocket for tuition. Yes, 70 percent  
15 of our students go to college for free, but  
16 I'm a part of that percentage that does not.  
17 Even the percentage that does go to school  
18 for free are still impacted by the TAP gap  
19 and these irrational tuition increases.

20 For us to be here on a Tuesday  
21 afternoon pleading for the investment we  
22 deserve in a quality higher education is  
23 quite frankly ridiculous. Fully funded  
24 higher education is a right, and it is not

1 something we should be begging for.

2 Amongst the many problems we are  
3 facing at CUNY senior colleges, our community  
4 colleges are also being affected as well.  
5 We've been experiencing a drastic enrollment  
6 decrease in community colleges. However,  
7 that doesn't mean quality resources should be  
8 decreased as well.

9 With the new faculty contract, we need  
10 the State Legislature to step up for  
11 additional funding or else the burden will  
12 fall on the backs of students. We are  
13 calling for an increase in base aid funding  
14 for community colleges. The Executive Budget  
15 maintains base operating aid for community  
16 colleges at \$2,947 per full-time equivalent  
17 student. However, the 98 percent funding  
18 floor that was included in the enacted budget  
19 is not continued, resulting in a \$3.6 million  
20 decrease in base aid funding.

21 We support CUNY's budget requesting a  
22 funding increase by \$250 per student in  
23 community college funding and restore  
24 98 percent funding for the 2018-2019 level.

1                   This brings me to my second point.

2                   Childcare center funding --

3                   CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: And you've used  
4                   up half the time for the three of you. So  
5                   I'm just letting you know.

6                   MS. AGU: Hi, everyone. My name is  
7                   Nicole Agu, and I'm an international student  
8                   at the College of Staten Island in the City  
9                   University of New York.

10                  I'm studying dual majors in accounting  
11                  and international business, and minoring in  
12                  finance and business data analytics, and I  
13                  currently serve as a student government  
14                  senator, club commissioner, and the  
15                  University Student Senate delegate on my CUNY  
16                  campus. In addition, I serve as the vice  
17                  chair for international students in the  
18                  University Student Senate in CUNY.

19                  And I also want to appreciate every  
20                  Senator here for holding a hearing to listen  
21                  to students' testimony on how urgent it is  
22                  that you should consider funding CUNY  
23                  entirely.

24                  So as an international student, we are

1 required by the federal government to show to  
2 the college that we can support ourselves  
3 financially in the United States. That is  
4 sufficient funding based on the projected  
5 tuition and fees at that time.

6           And why am I emphasizing on this?  
7 Because the tuition hikes every year, it  
8 affects the projected tuition that we are  
9 supposed to show for it, you know, as a  
10 financial aid throughout our college journey.  
11 But with the projected tuition, it's  
12 overshadowed when the tuition keeps  
13 increasing, and so that creates a really  
14 heavy financial burden on us, as we already  
15 pay three times more than the domestic  
16 students.

17           So I'm trying to share my story that  
18 it has not been easy for me, considering that  
19 I've been here on my own, catering for  
20 myself, applying for scholarships,  
21 contributing to the economy in the best way  
22 that I can, and it is very important that  
23 higher education should be invested, because  
24 every student, regardless of their status,

1 deserves an affordable college education.

2 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

3 And then I'm going to move over to our  
4 third testifier.

5 MR. HUNTER: So my name is Timothy  
6 Hunter, and I'm the student trustee for the  
7 City University of New York and the  
8 University Student Senate chairperson. I'm  
9 also the student government president at  
10 New York City College of Technology, which  
11 Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon represents.

12 So, you know, I think -- again,  
13 Senator Liz Krueger, I think that it's so sad  
14 and kind of sickening for me personally that  
15 we bring students all the way from the city  
16 to come here to Albany to fight for something  
17 that they deserve. And for us to only get  
18 five minutes to speak, I think that's  
19 something that we should strongly consider.  
20 After sitting here and having to listen to  
21 the chancellor and other people dancing  
22 around questions, direct questions, like  
23 Assemblymember Epstein asked, do you  
24 appreciate the funding that you got in the

1 budget, and people couldn't even give a  
2 straight answer.

3           So I think that the only -- I had some  
4 things that I wanted to say, but the only  
5 thing I'm going to say is this is not just a  
6 funding issue, this is an equity issue. I  
7 think that CUNY serves a population of  
8 students a majority of which are black and  
9 brown students, a majority of which are  
10 immigrant students. And to have  
11 international students who pay almost triple  
12 the price and students who go for, quote  
13 unquote, free through TAP awards, still not  
14 getting the same education, I think it's sad.  
15 My library closes at 8 o'clock now because of  
16 the TAP gap, so I get out of class at 8:30 --  
17 all my classes get out at 8:30 or 9 o'clock  
18 because, you know, I do this as my day job.  
19 And for me to not even have a library to go  
20 to -- like if I don't have internet at home,  
21 if my public library is closed, how do I even  
22 study for class?

23           You know, and I think that -- again,  
24 I'm going to just reiterate, this is an

1 equity issue. Cuts to ASAP? ASAP only helps  
2 students from low socioeconomic backgrounds.  
3 There's an ASAP student behind me, right,  
4 that went from a 2.4 GPA to the Dean's List  
5 because he started receiving ASAP.

6 And I think that it's super important  
7 that we try to like, you know, preserve these  
8 programs. And it's not just the he said, she  
9 said, the Republicans, the Democrats, the  
10 Governor, the Budget Director -- this is the  
11 time where the State Legislature steps up and  
12 does what they can. It's not waiting for a  
13 veto-proof majority, this is doing what we  
14 need to do to fund public higher education  
15 and make sure that it's a right.

16 So thank you.

17 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

18 Deborah Glick, Higher Ed, Assembly.

19 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: I very much  
20 appreciate your referencing the impacts, the  
21 real-life impacts. So if you are working,  
22 you take classes -- I spent a lot of time  
23 working full-time, going to -- of course I  
24 didn't have to worry about tuition.

1                   So you said your library closes at 8.  
2                   What is the general circumstance, that on  
3                   most classes where the limitation that you  
4                   have on accessing the same services that some  
5                   other student who can go during the day  
6                   full-time isn't facing?

7                   MR. HUNTER: So I think that this is  
8                   something that is a campus-by-campus basis.  
9                   Because of the TAP gap, which  
10                  disproportionately affects schools that take  
11                  in more TAP recipients -- and I'm pretty sure  
12                  you know this. So let's say if School A  
13                  takes in 80 percent TAP recipients and  
14                  School B takes in almost 40 percent, and  
15                  like, you know, School B has more students  
16                  coming in paying that full tuition and  
17                  therefore would have more revenue. But then  
18                  looking at School A that says, Well, I'll  
19                  take in more of these TAP recipients, they're  
20                  being disproportionately affected.

21                  So schools like City Tech, when I last  
22                  spoke to President Hotzler, I think it's like  
23                  60 percent. That's where like the TAP --  
24                  like the amount of students that are coming

1 with the TAP.

2 And I think the worst part about it is  
3 City Tech is a comprehensive school -- and  
4 I'm pretty sure Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon  
5 knows this -- so they offer associate degree  
6 programs and bachelor degree programs. But  
7 at CUNY, our associate degree tuition is  
8 around \$4,000 and our senior college tuition  
9 is around \$6,900. So guess which price the  
10 students that are going to City Tech for an  
11 associate's degree program are paying? Of  
12 course that senior college amount.

13 So now even if you're -- like you get  
14 an associate's degree and you're receiving  
15 this TAP award for your associate's degree,  
16 you're still paying more just because you  
17 went to a comprehensive school rather than  
18 going to a community college.

19 And I think when it gets into the tit  
20 for tat city versus state, who's going to put  
21 in what for what, I think that like the  
22 students are at the fray of all this. And we  
23 heard from an international student who is  
24 battling home insecurities right now. And

1           you would think because she pays triple  
2           she'll get triple the education, but she's  
3           dealing with the same problems that we are.  
4           You know?

5                        So I think it's really sad and  
6           disheartening that, you know, we have to deal  
7           with this. Because if you ask any other  
8           administrator from CUNY or SUNY or from  
9           anywhere, straight up, they're like, Oh,  
10          well, you know, there's this percentage and  
11          this percentage. But it's real people, and I  
12          think that's what we need to look at in the  
13          State Legislature.

14                       ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Are there  
15          other -- it's not just tuition, because  
16          there's also fees.

17                       MR. HUNTER: Yes.

18                       ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Which are the  
19          most difficult fees to justify from your  
20          point of view?

21                       MR. HUNTER: I think --

22                       MS. PIQUANT: Fees? I think all fees  
23          are a little ridiculous for us to justify. I  
24          just want to put it on the record, for the

1           mental health fee, we students are not here  
2           for it. Why do we have to pay for mental  
3           health services or health and wellness or  
4           whatever that becomes, and it takes six  
5           months on some campuses to see a counselor?  
6           Is that really seeing a counselor? I mean,  
7           these are human beings that we're dealing  
8           with. We are real people.

9                     You know, we have a student like my  
10           colleague, she was battling home insecurity  
11           and she had to spend her whole winter break  
12           trying to figure out where she's going to put  
13           a roof over her head. But she's still here  
14           today. So --

15                    MR. HUNTER: I think that -- like just  
16           piggybacking off what the vice chair of  
17           legislative affairs, Juvanie Piquant, had  
18           stated, the health and wellness fee is  
19           something that kind of caught us off guard as  
20           students because, you know, you're coming in  
21           thinking okay, we're going to fight tuition  
22           hikes, we're going to try to get this money  
23           for the TAP gap, and then out of left field  
24           you're seeing this health and wellness fee.

1           Because we spent the whole of the year prior  
2           talking about the lack of mental health  
3           services on our campuses, so it's like, Oh,  
4           wait, so we talk about it so you can shift it  
5           on us to pay it?

6                     And I think that right now we're still  
7           waiting for -- because if you look at CUNY's  
8           budget proposal, the breakdown isn't really  
9           there. So like, you know, it's kind of  
10          interesting, you know, like -- just like  
11          three or four sentences on the health and  
12          wellness fee. So the board and everybody is  
13          still kind of waiting for those documents.  
14          I've got a chance to look at some. But, you  
15          know, we're still working on whatever that  
16          is.

17                    But I think that it just shows that  
18          the state disinvestment is too -- it's too  
19          like -- it's just so distant, you know? Even  
20          with the telecounseling, I know that there's  
21          been cuts to that at the SUNY side too, which  
22          is truly disappointing. You know, because  
23          it's like you're going to try to shift it  
24          onto students and if enrollment declines,

1           that means that we're going to lose a  
2           guidance counselor? Like -- like, you know,  
3           I think that it just doesn't make sense,  
4           especially for our smaller schools. I wonder  
5           how that's going to help them, you know.

6                     ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Thank you.  
7           Thank you very much, A, for being here  
8           waiting all day and for the fact that you're,  
9           you know, still working hard to get through  
10          school. And I appreciate that.

11                    MR. HUNTER: Thank you so much,  
12          Assemblymember Glick.

13                    CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Senator Toby  
14          Stavisky.

15                    SENATOR STAVISKY: We've spent a lot  
16          of time together. I said earlier, I don't  
17          know if you were here, that the Higher Ed  
18          Committee in the Senate held hearings  
19          throughout the state, from Buffalo to  
20          Nassau County, and without question the  
21          students were the stars of the testimony that  
22          we received. And Tim and our -- his  
23          colleagues and I have discussed many of these  
24          issues, and I thank you.

1           I also asked about the fees, because I  
2           thought they were a little bit unfair.

3           Is there anything you want to add to  
4           your testimony? Because I really appreciate  
5           your coming not only here, but also to the EI  
6           hearings and for your work as student  
7           government leaders.

8           MR. HUNTER: There are some -- oh, I'm  
9           sorry, you get to go first.

10          MS. AGU: So as an international  
11          student, it's very obvious that we are not  
12          eligible for any of the financial assistance  
13          that CUNY offers to their students, like TAP,  
14          ASAP, financial aid and all that. So -- and  
15          even scholarship opportunities are very,  
16          very -- stressing the "very" -- limited for  
17          international students, because even students  
18          who receive scholarship opportunities, they  
19          still pay half of their tuition or more than  
20          half of their tuition.

21          So I'm in this position as a vice  
22          chair representing all international students  
23          because I was once an international student  
24          peer advisor, and I counseled international

1 students like myself, and I heard their own  
2 stories. And it's -- like Tim said, it's sad  
3 that the financial pressure is just so much  
4 on the students that sometimes the option is  
5 to drop out. And I feel like if we were to  
6 come in terms with, you know, ideas and  
7 strategic plans in order to close this gap,  
8 which you've mentioned time without number  
9 that it can't happen in a year, that would  
10 help international students to, you know,  
11 plan strategically for their projected  
12 tuition budget, and would also provide more  
13 scholarship opportunities for them.

14 MR. HUNTER: I think that, you know,  
15 in addition to what Nicole has said, there's  
16 two things that I definitely want to  
17 highlight for like, I guess, the State  
18 Legislature. Number one being that the  
19 DREAM Act, even though I think it was a  
20 really great program, I think that there's  
21 still some kinks to work out in terms of like  
22 transparency of information.

23 But our student leaders on campuses,  
24 some of these student leaders are Dreamers as

1 well, and they're undocumented students. But  
2 because they're undocumented, they're not  
3 eligible for some of the stipends from the  
4 student activity fee, because I think they're  
5 treated as tax-levy dollars.

6 So I think that this is -- I think my  
7 predecessors have tried to get it into the  
8 DREAM Act in terms of allowing Dreamers to  
9 have access to a stipend. Because what we're  
10 doing is we're saying, hey, listen, you're  
11 going to pay this fee but you're not going to  
12 be able to benefit if you serve as a student  
13 leader.

14 And I know that on this panel we have  
15 some former student leaders as well. And I  
16 think that sometimes a small compensation can  
17 help with paying tuition if you're in that,  
18 what is it, like 25 percent of like students  
19 that get rejected by HESC. You know, I think  
20 that like if you're in that group, I think  
21 the least that we can do is provide you with  
22 some sort of stipend.

23 There's actually a predecessor that  
24 served in this position as a student trustee

1           that did not get paid at all. And I think  
2           that like it's kind of disappointing that  
3           someone's out here putting their life on the  
4           line for students, traveling to Albany every  
5           other week, talking with so many elected  
6           officials. And for you to just not have any  
7           means, you know, I think that's something  
8           that's a stand-alone bill that I'm pretty  
9           sure right here we can probably pass. But I  
10          think that's something to consider.

11                        The second thing that I would take a  
12          look at is those portables at Medgar Evers  
13          College. I'm pretty sure like, again,  
14          Senator Stavisky had asked the chancellor  
15          about it and kind of got a little tap-dance  
16          about it or whatever the case is. But I  
17          think that for us -- my mom attended  
18          Medgar Evers College in 1993. She had class  
19          in those portables. Students are still  
20          taking classes in those portables, those same  
21          ones that my mom attended. Right? And then  
22          she went to New Paltz afterwards. Right?

23                        So I think that like seeing that, you  
24          know, like it's just, to me -- again, it's

1 a -- it's an equity issue. If we're going to  
2 be equitable across the board, you know, I  
3 think that this is something that we need to  
4 take a real serious look at, which students  
5 aren't getting their end of the deal.

6 SENATOR STAVISKY: And your mother, I  
7 can assure you, is very proud of you. I say  
8 that as a mother.

9 MR. HUNTER: I'm proud to be her son.

10 SENATOR STAVISKY: Okay, thank you.

11 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

12 Assembly?

13 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Assemblymember  
14 Epstein, to be followed by Assemblymember  
15 Smith.

16 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: I also want to  
17 really thank you for everything you're doing.  
18 And obviously we all need to work harder to  
19 ensure that public education is available for  
20 people. And to see, you know, doubling of  
21 tuition over a 15-year or 20-year period is  
22 outrageous.

23 And so I guess one is -- I just want  
24 to be clear, your position is no tuition

1           increase or no tuition increase without a TAP  
2           increase? Which is your general position?

3           MR. HUNTER: Free CUNY. Okay, I think  
4           that --

5           (Laughter.)

6           MR. HUNTER: -- what we need to do is  
7           --

8           MS. PIQUANT: No, free CUNY. Free  
9           CUNY. It's coming soon.

10          (Laughter.)

11          MR. HUNTER: I think that what we  
12          should definitely take a look at is  
13          freezing -- I think that -- actually it was  
14          Thomas DiNapoli I think said it yesterday at  
15          NYSUT, he said it shouldn't be education or  
16          healthcare, it should be both.

17          ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Right.

18          MR. HUNTER: Right? And I think the  
19          same thing applies to tuition increases and  
20          TAP. It shouldn't be like a tuition increase  
21          or TAP reform, it should be both. We should  
22          try to freeze tuition and do that.

23          And I think another thing to  
24          highlight, just to echo Senator Stavisky's

1           standpoint, if we decide that, okay, let's  
2           get some money for a TAP gap, let's fill the  
3           TAP gap together -- great. Tuition -- if  
4           that hike gets approved by the board, we're  
5           right back where we started. You know?  
6           Let's say you fill that gap but it's not  
7           enough to cover the TAP gap for the following  
8           year. Basically what we're doing is just  
9           playing the game of catch-up, and we'll just  
10          always have a deficit.

11                        So if you don't put enough to offset  
12          the upcoming year tuition increases, or --  
13          which I suggest -- put 36 million up front  
14          and freeze tuition and then start trying to  
15          fund the TAP gap separately, you know, I  
16          think that makes more sense. You don't run a  
17          business by just saying like, okay, well, I'm  
18          not going to take in like, you know, any  
19          revenue and somehow save crumbling  
20          infrastructure. You want to be able to get  
21          the state to put in that money in  
22          substitute of the backs of the students that  
23          made --

24                        ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Timothy, I'm

1 almost out of time, so I don't know if  
2 someone else wants to -- we all have time  
3 limitations. I don't know if anyone else  
4 wants to add to it.

5 And I know we wanted to -- so all  
6 fees, all additional fees. You know, mental  
7 health fees, book, the additional fees -- we  
8 feel like we should be eliminating those,  
9 that people should be able to go to school  
10 and tuition through TAP should cover all  
11 expenses. Is that everyone's position --

12 MR. HUNTER: Yes.

13 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: -- that we  
14 should have no additional fees?

15 MS. PIQUANT: And ultimately moving  
16 towards a strategic planning of how we can go  
17 back to free and fully funded CUNY.

18 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Great. And then  
19 you can start -- support my legislation to  
20 allow tuition-free education.

21 And so just one last thing, because I  
22 know we talked a lot about mental health  
23 issues and a lot of students who are  
24 struggling with mental health. Can you on

1 the ground just tell us what you're hearing  
2 from students around lack of access to mental  
3 health providers and what impact that might  
4 be having on students?

5 MS. AGU: Well, students whom I've  
6 told about this mental health increase in the  
7 tuition, they think that it's very  
8 unnecessary because even -- even -- it has  
9 already been implemented, there is already an  
10 increase in the tuition. The Board of  
11 Trustees have approved it.

12 But the thing is that they keep  
13 increasing the fees, but the resources are  
14 still going to be stagnant, and we all know  
15 that. There will be more understaffed, you  
16 know, mental health counsel offices, there  
17 will be more long waiting hours to see a  
18 counselor. So I feel like nothing will  
19 actually change, even with this increase.  
20 That is why they deem it to be very  
21 unnecessary, every student that I've talked  
22 to. No one has supported this fee as far as  
23 I've mentioned it.

24 MR. HUNTER: And lastly, it doesn't

1           come out of TAP. You know, it would have to  
2           come out of your Pell grants or any other  
3           grants that you get. So if you thought you  
4           were going to use your money to get books,  
5           it's going towards something that we still  
6           have yet to see.

7                       CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: And moving to  
8           Assemblymember Smith.

9                       ASSEMBLYMAN SMITH: Thank you.

10                      So my question is quick. If you had  
11           an additional three minutes to speak to us,  
12           what would you say, in closing?

13                      (Laughter.)

14                      MS. AGU: Okay, so I took this  
15           position as vice chair to represent  
16           international students, like I said, and  
17           there is one thing that resonated to me was  
18           international students in CUNY -- we all  
19           fight for all students in CUNY and SUNY, but  
20           I feel like sometimes we, you know, forget  
21           the other small percentage of students which  
22           are international students, and so we don't  
23           really consider them when we're trying to  
24           like talk about budgets and, you know, the

1 rest of it that benefits other students.

2 So that is why I had to show up today,  
3 to, you know, appeal to every one of you that  
4 whenever you're making decisions for CUNY or  
5 SUNY, please include international students  
6 in your plan, because we are still students  
7 in the City University of New York.

8 MS. PIQUANT: I have one minute, but I  
9 would like to get a little bit personal.  
10 Without CUNY I wouldn't be where I am today.  
11 To serve as the vice chair of legislative  
12 affairs and to represent 500,000 students is  
13 really an honor, especially as a young woman  
14 of color. My parents are immigrants. My  
15 father was an adjunct at Brooklyn College.  
16 Without CUNY I would not be here today, and I  
17 hold education dearly to my heart.

18 And I would like you to think about  
19 all the CUNY students, the CUNY students who  
20 are at Medgar, you know, in trailers taking  
21 classes, the students who are sleeping on  
22 campuses, the students who are food insecure.  
23 Just think long and hard when things come  
24 across your desk. That's all I have to say.

1 And you'll be seeing us much more very soon.

2 MR. HUNTER: Assemblymember Smith, I  
3 appreciate you giving us the extra time to  
4 just even like voice some of our concerns.

5 I think one of the easy wins this  
6 year, definitely the DREAM Act, like whatever  
7 that is in terms of helping those students to  
8 get that like additional funding. I have  
9 friends that are undocumented that are  
10 student leaders that I don't -- I don't --  
11 like I don't know how they're going to be  
12 able to get through the semester without some  
13 sort of additional help.

14 And I think that, you know, as we look  
15 at, again, those trailers, looking at our  
16 students, the morale is really low. So it's  
17 really hard to get students like organized.  
18 And if we can come away with some sort of  
19 win, this is the second year on like a real  
20 trailblazing front for the State Legislature.

21 And I think that the last thing I  
22 would say is that ASAP -- well, two last  
23 things. The ASAP program that got cut,  
24 please don't let -- don't put politics over

1 people. Please let's advocate for ASAP to  
2 get back in the budget before the end of the  
3 budget session.

4 And lastly, this TAP gap thing, it's  
5 affecting more people than we know. And I  
6 think it's important that we take a real,  
7 real close look at it and put the pressure on  
8 HESC, put the pressure on the chancellor --  
9 he's on both sides -- and figure out what we  
10 can do to help the students in New York  
11 State. Because pretty much everyone here has  
12 benefited from public higher education.

13 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you all  
14 very much for being with us today --

15 MR. HUNTER: Thank you.

16 MS. AGU: Thank you.

17 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: -- and for  
18 missing your classes. But they'll give you  
19 credit for this.

20 MS. PIQUANT: Thank you.

21 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Or we'll give  
22 you credit.

23 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: We'll give you  
24 credit.



1 further to my right, Brad Hershenson, who is  
2 our director of legislative affairs.

3 So we, as the SUNY Student Assembly,  
4 are charged with representing all of those  
5 voices. And given the charged political  
6 environment we all exist in, those voices  
7 have been louder than ever.

8 Higher education has been thrust into  
9 the national policy spotlight like never  
10 before. Every major Democratic candidate for  
11 president has some sort of plan to offer at  
12 least partial free tuition for public higher  
13 education. And I think students are tapping  
14 into that national enthusiasm for investment  
15 in higher ed in ways that we've never seen  
16 before, and that's juicing our advocacy like  
17 never before.

18 But what I think is lost in that  
19 national conversation about higher ed,  
20 particularly about public higher ed, is that  
21 it's not just about affordability. An  
22 affordable degree is great, but a degree is  
23 only worth as much as the education that  
24 degree provides you and the skills you leave

1 with that -- that you gain over the course of  
2 your education. And in order to get a  
3 high-quality education, in order to make that  
4 degree mean and be worth something, New York  
5 State needs to invest in the academic success  
6 of students.

7 And the Student Assembly has  
8 identified a number of key funding priorities  
9 for this budget cycle where we believe the  
10 state's investment could help enhance the  
11 student experience, enhance the academic  
12 success of students, and continue to build on  
13 the promise of a SUNY education for all.

14 And my colleagues will hit on some of  
15 those key priorities. Bryce?

16 MR. MAC: Before I begin, I would like  
17 to thank the entire panel for letting me come  
18 here today and speak.

19 Like Austin said, my name is Bryce  
20 Mac. I'm a student at SUNY New Paltz with  
21 the hopes of one day running for public  
22 office. So I hope to be where you are today.

23 But one of our key advocacy points is  
24 the reform of the community college funding

1 model. Community colleges in New York State  
2 are funded one part by the state, one part by  
3 the county, and one part by the students.  
4 However, for the past several years, students  
5 have had to hold the burden of increases in  
6 tuition and fees when it's the state's  
7 investment that is needed.

8 This is something that needs to be  
9 addressed, and soon. If it isn't, students,  
10 faculty and staff will suffer tremendously.

11 Community colleges are a hidden gem,  
12 not only in this state but across the  
13 country. They are the foundation for many  
14 students, including myself. However, if the  
15 state doesn't increase their investment,  
16 these schools both in SUNY and CUNY won't be  
17 able to uphold the messages they were founded  
18 on.

19 This past summer, my family and I had  
20 to go through one of the hardest situations  
21 in New York State -- homelessness. My family  
22 and I were homeless. And during those rough  
23 months, we had to choose between living on  
24 the streets or living in a hotel. My

1 grandmother is a stroke victim, and I am a  
2 Type I diabetic, so of course we had to  
3 choose the hotel. But everybody knows hotels  
4 aren't cheap, so we exhausted all of our  
5 money.

6 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Bryce, I'm  
7 sorry --

8 MR. MAC: Yes.

9 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: -- can we just  
10 stop the clock, and we'll put more time.

11 Can someone up there shut the door?  
12 Because we're hearing the voices from the  
13 hall come down and it's echoing, and we'd  
14 like people to hear what you have to say.

15 MR. MAC: Thank you.

16 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Why don't you  
17 put the clock at three minutes, give you a  
18 little extra time since we were having  
19 difficulty hearing. But we need you all to  
20 follow the time. Thank you.

21 MR. MAC: Thank you so much.

22 As you know, hotels aren't cheap, so  
23 my family exhausted all of our money. I had  
24 to make a Go Fund Me page to make sure we

1           stayed in that hotel and we wouldn't end up  
2           on the streets.

3                     I remember walking up to my mother and  
4           asking her "Should I drop out of school and  
5           work full-time?" to help her pay for that  
6           hotel. She said "Absolutely not." She said  
7           I should continue to go to school and obtain  
8           my education.

9                     During these times, because we had no  
10          money, we had to rely on my former school's  
11          food pantry. If it wasn't for that food  
12          pantry, I wouldn't be sitting here today.

13                    Also, since we couldn't afford food, I  
14          couldn't afford any textbooks for the past  
15          fall semester. But I am blessed to say that  
16          I finished all those fall courses with  
17          straight As.

18                    However, not every student can do  
19          that. I am one of the lucky ones. I have a  
20          great support system; I survived. But the  
21          reality is not every student can do that and,  
22          sadly, I am not the only student who has been  
23          homeless. There will be other students who  
24          has, is, or will be homeless in the future.

1                   If you do not properly fund higher  
2                   education, schools both in SUNY and CUNY  
3                   won't be able to uphold the messages they  
4                   were founded on. If you do not properly fund  
5                   higher education, the youth of tomorrow will  
6                   be at a standstill. If you do not properly  
7                   fund higher education, that same food pantry  
8                   that saved my life won't be able to save  
9                   another. If you do not properly fund higher  
10                  education, dreams will die.

11                  Please make sure higher education is  
12                  properly funded this legislative session.

13                  MS. STRACHAN: Good afternoon. My  
14                  name is Takeena Strachan, and I represent the  
15                  thousands of students enrolled at SUNY  
16                  Oswego, as the Student Association president.

17                  Today I will highlight a few of the  
18                  experiences of myself and my colleagues at  
19                  SUNY Oswego and speak upon the importance of  
20                  investing in higher education.

21                  My institution successfully  
22                  administers a variety of student support  
23                  services and should be seen as a role model  
24                  for all institutions of higher education in

1 the state. The mental health services  
2 available to students at SUNY Oswego are  
3 imperative to students' success. As a  
4 student myself, I know the Counseling Center  
5 does the best it can with the resources  
6 available and the limited staff employed.

7 After hearing feedback of other  
8 students and witnessing the increase in  
9 mental health rates of young adults on my  
10 campus and also nationwide, with the help of  
11 the staff of our Counseling Center we are  
12 working to provide more accommodating  
13 resources to all students. We anticipate  
14 accomplishing more as the semester continues.

15 Just like other student campuses, we  
16 are determined to strengthen the mental  
17 health resources on our campus by pushing  
18 towards telehealth counseling alternatives,  
19 diversifying our counseling team, and  
20 providing more opportunities for students to  
21 educate themselves on mental health issues  
22 that they might encounter either personally  
23 or by association with a peer.

24 Additionally, all students have the

1 ability to reap the benefits of SHOP, or  
2 Students Helping Oswego Peers. SHOP is our  
3 student- and community-supported clothing and  
4 food pantry on campus. Although this  
5 resource is a positive for all students, it  
6 is not accommodating for everyone. To find  
7 that our students on my campus were  
8 struggling to access food and clothing  
9 encouraged myself and my colleagues, through  
10 constructive discussions, to identify how we  
11 would increase support to students in need.

12 Currently the Oswego Student  
13 Association is looking to provide an  
14 extension on our pantry's operating hours  
15 and, in collaboration with the administration  
16 of Oswego, to advocate for an increase in  
17 public donations to increase our inventory.

18 Our campus has encouraged our school's  
19 alumni association to give back and to help  
20 end our campus-wide issues, but their  
21 donations are not measuring up to the number  
22 of students deciding to eat their first two  
23 weeks of school or to purchase their books  
24 for class.

1           There is more work to be done now, as  
2           this is not just an issue on the campus of  
3           SUNY Oswego but an opportunity to invest in  
4           all institutions of higher education within  
5           the State of New York.

6           Thank you.

7           CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

8           Brad, would you like a minute to say  
9           something?

10          MR. HERSHENSON: Sure, thank you.

11          CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We'll do a  
12          minute, sort of a family courtesy.

13          MR. HERSHENSON: Good afternoon. My  
14          name is Brad Hershenson. I am a student at  
15          the University at Albany and the legislative  
16          director for the Student Assembly.

17          CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Move that  
18          closer, or slide into it.

19          MR. HERSHENSON: I'd like to touch  
20          upon the importance of capital investments,  
21          specifically the element of sustainability.

22          At SUNY we need infrastructure  
23          investment. One, because much of SUNY was  
24          built decades ago, we need to make the

1 appropriate upgrades. A lot of SUNY is  
2 deteriorating at the same rate, and we need  
3 investment to make the upgrades to bring SUNY  
4 to where it can be.

5 And two, we need investment in our  
6 communities. We need buildings that properly  
7 use resources, electricity efficiently, water  
8 efficiently, to invest in geothermal heating,  
9 green roofs, solar and wind where  
10 appropriate. And what we can do with that  
11 when we're demonstrating that on our  
12 campuses, on our infrastructure, is we can  
13 educate students and we can use the faculty,  
14 students and staff on our campus to build the  
15 new generation workforce that is going to  
16 prioritize sustainable development.

17 I also want to mention that elements  
18 of resiliency are demonstrated in our  
19 communities when we do that. A lot of our  
20 campuses have stormwater management plans  
21 that are in collaboration with the different  
22 regions across New York, and 40 percent of  
23 public infrastructure in New York is  
24 accounted for by SUNY. That's almost half of

1 the public infrastructure across the state,  
2 is just the State University of New York  
3 alone.

4 And when demonstrating those elements  
5 of resiliency, whether it's the natural  
6 landscape or the built environment or the  
7 public health benefits, we're talking about  
8 investment into our system. And as President  
9 and Trustee Ostro has said time and time  
10 again, investment in SUNY is investment in  
11 New York.

12 And we bring elements of resiliency to  
13 our community. SUNY pays that back through  
14 the property taxes, through our income taxes,  
15 through the houses that our students, faculty  
16 and staff buy. Students and faculty and  
17 staff from SUNY are likely to live in  
18 New York, to stay in New York for decades,  
19 and we pay that back, we pay that investment  
20 back to New York.

21 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Thank you.

22 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you very  
23 much, all of you, for being here. It's good  
24 to see that we have a future generation that

1 will be taking our place eventually.

2 Thank you. Let me see if there are  
3 any questions. Assemblywoman Glick?

4 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: It's not so much  
5 a question except to thank you. And, you  
6 know, we stay in constant contact about the  
7 issues.

8 And, you know, I want to congratulate  
9 you. There was never a term that I got  
10 straight As, so to do that with all of the  
11 challenges and barriers, I just want to take  
12 the hat that I don't have on off to you.

13 And to say that, you know, the student  
14 government from SUNY has been an incredibly  
15 vibrant resource for us, and we hope we can  
16 continue to do that and figure out how we can  
17 reach out, within the community and beyond,  
18 for alumni to step up and say -- as you say,  
19 yes, you stay here, you pay taxes. We want  
20 the Governor to know that. We need to get  
21 people to communicate that directly -- not  
22 through the students, but through folks  
23 writing their own note, letter, email, phone  
24 call, whatever.

1                   Thanks.

2                   CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

3                   Alicia? Alicia Hyndman.

4                   ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Really quick,  
5 I just wanted to say I'm a SUNY New Paltz  
6 grad. And I never planned to run for office,  
7 and you are planning to run for office, so  
8 let's keep in touch.

9                   (Laughter.)

10                  MR. MAC: Definitely. Most  
11 definitely.

12                  And thank you, Chair Glick.

13                  ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: I really --  
14 the alumni association, a lot of us will be  
15 up there in May. I really hope we could  
16 connect and be helpful to you.

17                  MR. MAC: I will love that. Thank  
18 you.

19                  ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Thank you.

20                  CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Great. Thank  
21 you all for --

22                  CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you all.

23                  CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: -- for being  
24 here. Good luck in your studies.

1                   Next we have the Commission on  
2                   Independent Colleges and Universities, Mary  
3                   Beth Labate, president.

4                   MS. LABATE: Good afternoon, everyone.

5                   CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Good afternoon.

6                   MS. LABATE: I thought we'd have the  
7                   results of the Iowa caucus by now, but we  
8                   don't, so I'm sorry, guys.

9                   (Laughter.)

10                  MS. LABATE: Good afternoon,  
11                  Chairpersons Krueger and Weinstein and  
12                  Higher Ed Chairpersons Glick and Stavisky.  
13                  Thank you for your leadership, your fortitude  
14                  during these hearings, and the opportunity  
15                  for me to share my thoughts with you and the  
16                  committee today.

17                  I'm Mary Beth Labate, president of the  
18                  Commission on Independent Colleges and  
19                  Universities, representing more than a  
20                  hundred private, not-for-profit colleges and  
21                  universities and nearly 500,000 students  
22                  across the state.

23                  New York State is home to the largest  
24                  independent sector of higher ed in the

1 nation, educating 40 percent of the state's  
2 1.2 million students, including nearly  
3 300,000 New Yorkers, and playing a vital role  
4 in our state's diverse higher education  
5 ecosystem.

6 Few other states rely so heavily on  
7 its private, not-for-profit colleges to  
8 confer degrees and fulfill dreams, yet  
9 New York ranks 17th in the nation in its  
10 per-capita, needs-based support for students  
11 at private, not-for-profit colleges.

12 New York's independent sector is also  
13 an integral part of the statewide economy,  
14 responsible for more than 415,000 jobs across  
15 the state and nearly \$90 billion in economic  
16 impact. For centuries we have embraced the  
17 call to educate students of every background  
18 while bringing jobs, talent and energy to  
19 communities across the state from Long Island  
20 to Buffalo. Those of you with campuses in or  
21 near your districts know that better than  
22 anyone.

23 Our students represent -- let me tell  
24 you a little about our students. Our

1 students represent the diversity of our  
2 state. Almost 50 percent of all  
3 African-American and Latinx students who  
4 receive a bachelor's or graduate degree earn  
5 them at a not-for-profit college. Our  
6 students represent every income level.  
7 Two-thirds of our New York students are from  
8 families that earn less than \$125,000  
9 annually. Our students have higher  
10 graduation rates and lower loan-default rates  
11 than any other higher education sector in the  
12 state.

13 Eighty-five percent of our students  
14 benefit from financial aid directly from our  
15 schools, bringing the average net price to  
16 attend one of our schools down to \$26,888.  
17 Our students are making an investment in  
18 themselves and their future, and our colleges  
19 are with them every step of the way,  
20 providing \$6 billion in financial aid from  
21 our own resources.

22 This year, as our state faces a  
23 looming multi-billion-dollar deficit, it is  
24 more important than ever that we target our

1 resources towards students with the greatest  
2 need. For this to happen, New York must  
3 increase support for the state's low- and  
4 moderate-income college students and restore  
5 funding for programs that allow  
6 not-for-profit colleges to remain a vital  
7 part of their communities and the higher  
8 education landscape.

9 Our most important ask is for the  
10 long-overdue expansion of the state's Tuition  
11 Assistance Program, TAP, which will benefit  
12 New York's neediest students regardless of  
13 which college in New York they choose to  
14 attend, and will help to close the TAP gap at  
15 CUNY and SUNY. For nearly 50 years, TAP has  
16 helped students from New York's lowest-income  
17 families realize their college dream. Today  
18 the program supports roughly 320,000  
19 recipients, including 64,000 students for  
20 whom a not-for-profit college is their  
21 choice.

22 Unfortunately, in recent years TAP has  
23 been helping fewer and fewer students, in  
24 part because the income eligibility has not



1 amount of financial aid we provide over the  
2 past 10 years. Now, New York State, we are  
3 asking you to do your part by increasing TAP  
4 over a three-year phase-in period as follows:  
5 Increase the minimum award to \$1,000 from  
6 \$500, the maximum award to \$6,000 from  
7 \$5,165, and the income eligibility ceiling to  
8 \$110,000 from \$80,000. These actions will  
9 help the neediest students at SUNY, CUNY and  
10 not-for-profit institutions.

11 In addition to TAP, Opportunity  
12 Programs like HEOP can open the door to  
13 higher education for many of the state's  
14 neediest students. We're grateful that the  
15 Governor did not cut the programs, and we ask  
16 them to be expanded.

17 Finally, I ask that you ensure that  
18 our state's diverse higher education  
19 ecosystem continues to thrive. This can be  
20 done by supporting a small increase in the  
21 Bundy Aid, a \$35 million program and the only  
22 source of operating aid for not-for-profit  
23 colleges.

24 We're also requesting that the

1           \$30 million be restored for the Higher  
2           Education Capital Assistance Matching Grant  
3           Program, or HECap. Our schools provide a  
4           three-to-one match to HECap and pay  
5           prevailing wage on all work funded from the  
6           grant.

7                     The Governor has proposed a historic  
8           \$175 billion state infrastructure plan,  
9           including \$9 billion for SUNY and CUNY  
10          infrastructure over the next six years, and  
11          that is fantastic. But in this context,  
12          \$30 million to support a sector that educates  
13          40 percent of all students is a modest but  
14          important investment.

15                    In closing, I call on you to renew our  
16          state's commitment to the higher education  
17          landscape in New York that has for  
18          generations been a hallmark of our greatness.  
19          I look forward to working with you and your  
20          legislative colleagues to ensure that low-  
21          and moderate-income students are not  
22          overlooked and that our campuses can remain  
23          vibrant members of their communities.

24                    Thanks, and I welcome any questions.

1 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

2 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Assemblyman  
3 Smith.

4 ASSEMBLYMAN SMITH: Thank you.

5 Can you expand a little bit on the  
6 Enhanced Tuition Awards? Do you know offhand  
7 how many colleges are participating or what  
8 the --

9 MS. LABATE: There are a total of 38  
10 colleges participating; 30 are not-for-profit  
11 colleges. It's been a little tough to get  
12 data, but I believe there are about 2,000  
13 recipients of the award and it's been about  
14 an average award of something a little shy of  
15 \$2,000 per recipient.

16 ASSEMBLYMAN SMITH: Okay. And then in  
17 terms of the HECap, what are some of the  
18 projects that right now the proposed  
19 \$30 million cut -- obviously that would  
20 really make it a little bit harder to do some  
21 of these capital improvements. But can you  
22 expand on some of the things that we're  
23 looking to do this coming year?

24 MS. LABATE: Sure. It's a competitive

1 process, so it really will be up to the  
2 colleges to put forward the capital projects  
3 that they want to move with.

4 I can tell you in the past we've  
5 built -- we've helped to build buildings,  
6 HECap has helped to build buildings that have  
7 a focus on sustainability. Sometimes it's  
8 helping to equip those buildings with the  
9 latest technology that is needed to, let's  
10 say, serve in the nursing profession. So  
11 it's all over the board.

12 I know on Long Island there have been  
13 several schools that have benefited from it,  
14 and I'd be glad to get you a list of all the  
15 Long Island schools that have been able to  
16 leverage HECap.

17 ASSEMBLYMAN SMITH: Thank you so much.

18 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Senate?

19 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Senator Toby  
20 Stavisky.

21 SENATOR STAVISKY: Yeah, real quick.

22 I know the colleges are just starting  
23 the application process, I assume for the  
24 2019 money, for the HECap money.

1 MS. LABATE: That's correct.

2 SENATOR STAVISKY: So I assume all of  
3 it -- none of it has been really expended.

4 MS. LABATE: Correct.

5 SENATOR STAVISKY: How would you  
6 improve Enhanced TAP? In a minute.

7 MS. LABATE: I think there are a few  
8 things. I think -- first and foremost, we --  
9 our preference is the TAP program.

10 SENATOR STAVISKY: I know that.

11 MS. LABATE: We think it's more  
12 progressive, it focuses on all students.

13 On the Enhanced Tuition Awards  
14 Program, I think there are a few issues that  
15 we take -- have some concern with. One is  
16 it's not really the equivalent of Excelsior.  
17 The maximum award that a student can receive  
18 from the state is \$3,000. The maximum award  
19 that a student under Excelsior can receive is  
20 the full cost of SUNY tuition and CUNY  
21 tuition. We know that's infrequently the  
22 case, but the fact is the award levels are  
23 significantly different. So that would be  
24 one big change.

1           I think the other thing that gives us  
2           pause is this requirement that you freeze  
3           tuition. Because what that tells our schools  
4           is for the relatively few students who can  
5           get an Enhanced Tuition Award and who have  
6           their tuition frozen, someone needs to make  
7           that up somewhere, and that unfortunately is  
8           the majority of students who are not  
9           receiving an Enhanced TAP award. And I think  
10          that is really the same in the public  
11          institutions as well.

12                 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

13                 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Senator Jim  
14          Seward.

15                 SENATOR SEWARD: Well, Mary Beth, it's  
16          good to see you.

17                 MS. LABATE: Nice to see you, Senator.

18                 SENATOR SEWARD: You've already shared  
19          with us the number of campuses that are  
20          participating in the Enhanced Tuition Awards.  
21          Can you share with us how many campuses that  
22          are currently participating in that program  
23          that actually may be setting limits on the  
24          number of students that will receive an award

1 due to having to provide that up to \$3,000  
2 match?

3 MS. LABATE: That's a great -- I don't  
4 have that exact number. I can get that for  
5 you.

6 Several of them, though, because they  
7 do not -- I think they're concerned about the  
8 equity of having some students guaranteed  
9 their tuition frozen and others not. And  
10 often you might have a higher-income student  
11 who is guaranteed their tuition is frozen and  
12 a lower-income student who cannot benefit  
13 from ETA who does not.

14 So I'll get you that information.

15 SENATOR SEWARD: That would be  
16 helpful.

17 And is the match the issue here?

18 MS. LABATE: The match is not so --  
19 the match is not the issue. Our schools --  
20 especially when the award is up to \$3,000,  
21 our schools are very generous in the amount  
22 of financial aid they provide. So our  
23 schools have always put a lot of skin in the  
24 game. So the match is not the issue so much.



1 Bundy Aid be increased by 3 percent. It  
2 would amount to about \$1.3 million.

3 The statute itself on Bundy Aid --  
4 which is supposed to award money based on the  
5 number of degrees, so it's a  
6 degree-completion incentive -- if the statute  
7 were allowed to prevail, funding for  
8 Bundy Aid would be about \$160 million.

9 SENATOR SEWARD: Great. Well, just in  
10 conclusion, not a question but a comment, we  
11 spent a lot of time today talking about SUNY  
12 and CUNY, and those are important, important  
13 issues. But I'm very pleased to have you  
14 come forward because no question that the  
15 independent sector in higher education serves  
16 so many students in New York State, and very  
17 often from lower-income levels as well.

18 MS. LABATE: Absolutely.

19 SENATOR SEWARD: And that's making a  
20 tremendous contribution not only  
21 educationally but economically, and we thank  
22 you.

23 MS. LABATE: Thank you.

24 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you. Thank

1           you for being here.

2                   CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

3                   MS. LABATE: Thank you.

4                   CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Next we have  
5 Association of Proprietary Colleges: Donna  
6 Stelling-Gurnett, president, Christopher  
7 Barto, vice president.

8                   And they'll be followed by On Point  
9 for College, to be followed by College &  
10 Community Fellowship.

11                   CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: And while they  
12 settle in, with 62 percent reporting, Iowa  
13 seems to be in the following order: Pete,  
14 Bernie, Elizabeth, Joe. More to come.

15                   MS. STELLING-GURNETT: All right.  
16 Late-breaking news, that's great. All right.

17                   So Senator Stavisky, Senator Krueger,  
18 members of the Legislature, thank you for  
19 this opportunity to present this testimony on  
20 behalf of the Association of Proprietary  
21 Colleges.

22                   My name is Donna Stelling-Gurnett.  
23 I'm the president of the association. And  
24 I'm here today with Christopher Barto of

1 LIM College.

2 Christopher and I have had the  
3 opportunity to participate in this hearing in  
4 the past, and I know you've heard us talk  
5 about APC's 12 family-owned member colleges  
6 that are -- have very strong student outcomes  
7 and are really committed to educational  
8 excellence, access and affordability.

9 Before I start our testimony today,  
10 though, I'd like to start by just saying  
11 thank you sincerely for your support and  
12 leadership last year as you helped us push  
13 back against the Governor's proposed  
14 For-Profit College Accountability Act. We  
15 feel his proposal was misguided and  
16 essentially would have closed an entire  
17 sector of higher education here in New York.

18 As we moved through the budget process  
19 last year, though, APC certainly learned a  
20 few lessons. We realized that there seems to  
21 be a lack of understanding of the current  
22 regulations that are already in existence,  
23 perhaps a lack of understanding about what  
24 data is already available, and probably most

1           importantly, what does it mean to truly be a  
2           family-owned institution, and how are they  
3           different than the large publicly traded  
4           for-profit colleges that you may hear about  
5           at the federal level.

6                        So as we were heading into this  
7           legislative session, we took a look at what  
8           we have available on our website. We have a  
9           very robust facts and figures page, but we  
10          also added a new section to our website where  
11          you can now see individual member profiles  
12          for each and every APC member. So you can  
13          click on that link and you can find out  
14          information about what family owns that  
15          institution, what year were they founded, who  
16          are they accredited by. We provide a link to  
17          their college scorecard page so you can get  
18          an understanding of their outcomes. And we  
19          also provide a student demographic section so  
20          you can see what types of students are  
21          attending that institution. And there's also  
22          a financial section so you can see what that  
23          college's 90/10 ratio is, what their fiscal  
24          composite score is, what their cohort default

1 rate is.

2 And our hope is that having all of  
3 this information will help foster a more  
4 constructive dialogue as we move through this  
5 legislative session.

6 So before I turn it over to  
7 Christopher to talk about some of our  
8 recommendations, I would just ask that you  
9 use the association as a resource as we go  
10 through this session.

11 So Christopher?

12 MR. BARTO: Thank you, Donna. Members  
13 of the Legislature, thank you for the  
14 opportunity to join my colleague in  
15 testifying today.

16 I'd like to speak about continued  
17 support for expanding TAP. TAP has served as  
18 the cornerstone of New York State's financial  
19 aid program, providing financial support to  
20 help ensure that thousands of students  
21 complete their degrees in a timely manner  
22 every year.

23 APC member colleges share the state's  
24 commitment to keeping college affordable. In

1           2018, the average tuition at APC member  
2           colleges increased less than 1 percent over  
3           the previous year, and in 2017 APC member  
4           colleges provided over 95 million in  
5           institutional grants and scholarships, more  
6           than double the amount of TAP funds received  
7           by all New York State proprietary colleges.

8                     Together, institutional support and  
9           TAP funding provides significant  
10          life-changing opportunities for students  
11          attending APC member colleges. Further, APC  
12          member colleges focus on ensuring that  
13          students progress towards their degrees while  
14          graduating on time, which helps to keep their  
15          student loan debt as low as possible.

16                    APC respectfully requests your  
17          consideration for the following enhancements  
18          to the TAP program.

19                    Increase funding, actually, for one of  
20          the ancillary programs, the Enhanced Tuition  
21          Award program. The ETA program is the  
22          private institutional counterpart, as we  
23          know, to Governor Cuomo's signature Excelsior  
24          program. The Governor has proposed

1 increasing the maximum income eligibility  
2 threshold to \$150,000 for both programs.  
3 While we appreciate the Governor's proposal  
4 to support a greater range of students, we  
5 also encourage lawmakers to increase the  
6 overall funding for the ETA program.

7 We join with many of our other  
8 colleagues who have testified today in  
9 pushing for increased funding for the TAP  
10 program. We feel that the TAP program is  
11 currently constrained in fulfilling its  
12 promise to students. We should be increasing  
13 the number of students served under the  
14 program, yet the Governor has proposed a  
15 \$60 million reduction in the program funding.

16 Increase the minimum TAP award to  
17 \$1,000, increase the maximum TAP award up to  
18 \$6,000. As has been noted today, the TAP  
19 maximum has not appreciably increased in over  
20 20 years, yet cost-of-living increases during  
21 that time have gone up almost 50 percent.

22 We also would support increasing the  
23 maximum net taxable income for TAP  
24 eligibility to \$110,000 and restoring maximum

1 TAP awards for two-year degree programs.

2 Investments in TAP are well  
3 established and proven investments in the  
4 future vitality of New York's workforce and  
5 the economic development of local communities  
6 around the state. Let's continue to ensure  
7 the efficacy of the TAP program in supporting  
8 New York's neediest students across all four  
9 sectors of higher education.

10 Thank you.

11 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

12 To Assemblymember Glick.

13 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: I see that  
14 you've chosen to highlight some of your  
15 student veterans, and I'm just wondering, is  
16 there -- what's the percentage of veterans  
17 that attend the proprietary colleges?

18 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: It's actually  
19 relatively small, honestly.

20 So we serve approximately 27,000  
21 students in our 12 APC member colleges; less  
22 than 700 of them are veterans that are using  
23 GI benefits. So maybe 2 percent, I think.

24 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Did you say

1 27,000 students?

2 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: Mm-hmm.

3 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: And roughly  
4 around 700 are --

5 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: Yes.

6 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: The graduation  
7 rate?

8 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: For those GI --

9 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: For -- on  
10 average, your general graduation rate across  
11 the 12 colleges.

12 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: A good  
13 question, actually. Let me just take a quick  
14 peek at our testimony.

15 On our last page of the testimony we  
16 give -- our on-time associate degree  
17 graduation rate is 29 percent.

18 MR. BARTO: And bachelor-degree  
19 graduation rates are higher than that. I can  
20 share that at LIM College our graduation rate  
21 is 54 percent.

22 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Thank you.

23 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

24 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

1 Thank you for being here today. Thank you.

2 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: Thank you.

3 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Next we will  
4 hear from On Point for College, Samuel Rowser  
5 and Kevin Marken, then College & Community  
6 Fellowship, followed by the Hispanic  
7 Federation.

8 MR. ROWSER: Good evening. I'd just  
9 like to thank Chairperson Stavisky on her way  
10 out and Assemblyperson Weinstein and  
11 Assemblyperson Glick for this opportunity,  
12 the budget hearing on higher education, for  
13 allowing us this opportunity to share.

14 My name is Samuel Rowser. I'm the  
15 executive director for On Point for College,  
16 and with me is our Utica director, Kevin  
17 Marken. Not with us today are our partners  
18 from New York City, Goddard Riverside Options  
19 Program and New Settlement Apartments in the  
20 Bronx.

21 I just want to thank you for this  
22 opportunity to talk with you about investing  
23 a million dollars in New York's future  
24 workforce. Since On Point for College was

1           founded in 1999, we've helped more than  
2           2700 students actually graduate from college.  
3           Over the course of their working lifetime,  
4           they'll earn over a billion dollars, which  
5           will be spent in their communities.

6                     About a year ago we did an assessment  
7           in Utica of the number of individuals that  
8           graduated that year, how many came back to  
9           the community, and it was 93 percent of those  
10          students came back to the community that they  
11          graduated from.

12                    Right now we're serving in Onondaga,  
13          Madison, Cayuga, Cortland, Oswego, Oneida and  
14          Herkimer Counties, and also with our partners  
15          in Manhattan and the Bronx.

16                    On Point provides college access,  
17          college success and career services to help  
18          young adults ages 17 to 29 to apply to,  
19          enroll in, and persist at college through  
20          graduation, while building skills and  
21          pre-professional experiences to help launch  
22          their careers.

23                    On Point is unique in the nation for  
24          the holistic approach we take to helping

1 students. Earlier you heard many of the  
2 students talk about a lot of the issues that  
3 they were having on the campuses and they  
4 have going through the process of education,  
5 and there are just a couple of things I  
6 really want to highlight.

7 On Point takes hundreds of students  
8 each year to visit colleges all over  
9 New York -- over 70 colleges throughout the  
10 state. In New York State we use a corps of  
11 dedicated volunteers or bus tickets to help  
12 students get to and from campus. On Point  
13 also partners with two dentists. Someone  
14 asked the question earlier, do you have to  
15 have healthcare? Most colleges require you  
16 have healthcare, but not dental. So what  
17 happens if you get a toothache and you're  
18 low-income? We have dentists that we go pick  
19 you up, bring you home, fix your teeth, take  
20 you back to college. Lose your eyeglasses,  
21 we get you an eyeglass exam and two pair of  
22 glasses.

23 On Point even partners with local  
24 colleges and we have housing at a private

1 college, Le Moyne College in Syracuse. For  
2 15 years, any students that are  
3 housing-challenged have the opportunity to  
4 stay on campus the entire summer semester,  
5 free of charge. And during the winter breaks  
6 we have an organization that they own  
7 apartments and they allow us to use their  
8 apartments over the short breaks for students  
9 to stay who are housing-challenged.

10 We also help students pay for  
11 textbooks, summer courses, outstanding bills  
12 that prevent them from re-enrolling, housing  
13 deposits and fees, when financial aid is  
14 unavailable or has run out.

15 We just want to say that an investment  
16 in On Point is also an investment in  
17 New York's higher education institutions.  
18 Seventy percent or more of our 2400 students  
19 that are enrolled now, we're serving this  
20 semester, attend public colleges across  
21 New York State. That's about 23 million --  
22 over \$23 million in tuition and fees and room  
23 and board at the community college, CUNY,  
24 SUNY system as well as some of the private

1 schools.

2 We have a great deal of experience in  
3 helping students navigate the system. On  
4 Point's advisers, we actually go to the  
5 campus and visit the students frequently  
6 throughout the year. At the community  
7 colleges we're there once a month. Our local  
8 colleges, we're there a couple of times a  
9 week.

10 On Point students persist at a higher  
11 rate -- 77 percent higher than the average at  
12 the community colleges, which is 60 percent.  
13 Our students bring TAP, Pell awards as well  
14 as student loan dollars to the campuses, and  
15 our generous donors help us to support these  
16 students.

17 If it had not been for On Point, many  
18 of our students would not be attending  
19 college. So we believe that providing the  
20 \$1 million in state funding for On Point's  
21 program will have an impact on thousands of  
22 low-income first-generation students each  
23 year, helping people consider going to  
24 college who might otherwise not have thought

1 college was possible and providing wraparound  
2 services to support students on every step of  
3 their journey toward their degrees.

4 Investments in these young people will  
5 immediately support colleges across the state  
6 and will bring long-term fruit as our  
7 graduates bring their degrees and skills to  
8 the state's workforce.

9 I just want to thank the members of  
10 the Higher Education Committee for this  
11 wonderful opportunity to share this  
12 information with you. And at the end of the  
13 day, we ask everyone to keep it On Point.

14 Thank you.

15 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.  
16 Thank you for your testimony today. Thank  
17 you.

18 So next we have College & Community  
19 Fellowship, followed by Hispanic Federation,  
20 followed by Police Benevolent Association of  
21 New York State, followed by SUNY student  
22 Mac-Olivier Lalanne. So people, if I called  
23 your organization, your name, you should make  
24 your way to the -- you should make your way

1 down. Thank you.

2 MS. GILESTRA: Hello. Thank you for  
3 the opportunity to speak today and provide  
4 testimony.

5 ASSEMBLYWOMAN GLICK: Pull it close to  
6 you. The acoustics are lousy.

7 MS. GILESTRA: Yes. My name is  
8 Ivelisse Gilestra, and I am the community  
9 organizer for College & Community Fellowship.

10 And we have been providing services  
11 for 20 years for formerly incarcerated women,  
12 direct services, and helping them achieve a  
13 college degree. We also have noticed that in  
14 the work that we do, we also approach many  
15 barriers from a systemic level.

16 And I'm here to talk today about the  
17 Turn on the TAP campaign that we are  
18 launching, and we seek the passage of Bill  
19 S790, championed by Montgomery, and A3975, by  
20 Aubry, to restore the Tuition Assistance  
21 Program, or TAP, for those incarcerated.

22 We have a broad collaboration of  
23 partners in this work. And just to give you  
24 a little history that I'm pretty sure that

1           you all know, TAP was operating successfully  
2           in New York State until 1995, a year after  
3           Pell Grants were banned at the federal level  
4           as well.

5                         So in the Executive Chamber Fiscal  
6           Year 2021 Budget Briefing Book it states that  
7           New York is leading the nation in expanding  
8           access to a quality and affordable college  
9           tuition. But this is false, because Tuition  
10          Assistance Program are not in New York for  
11          people incarcerated.

12                        There are 19 states that do provide  
13          state financial assistance, but New York is  
14          not one of them. And this is people that  
15          need it the most. This is a population that  
16          is usually excluded from conversation of  
17          education. And I want to talk a little bit  
18          about predictors or factors that lead to  
19          pathways to people to prison.

20                        One of them is growing up in a  
21          marginalized community, which is usually  
22          characterized by low rates of education  
23          attainment, criminalization of poverty. We  
24          have youth that drop out of high school,

1           which makes them 47 percent more likely to  
2           end up in prison. So we need to uplift these  
3           communities that need it the most.

4                     Access to higher education also  
5           produces a multigenerational effect,  
6           disrupting that intergenerational poverty.  
7           We have parents that partake in  
8           college-in-prison models and education  
9           inside, there's a likelihood their kids will  
10          be motivated to do the same, even if their  
11          parent is incarcerated.

12                    So education usually provides better  
13          employment, autonomy, which reduces the  
14          reliance on government assistance, and upward  
15          mobility. So education provides a myriad of  
16          benefits and has the potential, like I said  
17          again, to uplift a community that has been  
18          marginalized, excluded. So restoring TAP in  
19          general is just smart fiscal policy. It is a  
20          win-win.

21                    In the Executive Budget for fiscal  
22          year 2020 there was a proposed increase of  
23          \$154 million in higher ed. But for less than  
24          10 percent of this, and even less than

1           2 percent of the total TAP, we can be  
2           providing that to people incarcerated, people  
3           behind bars that really, really will benefit  
4           from this.

5                        So since this is an entitlement  
6           program, this will not take from  
7           nontraditional students, which is something  
8           that we -- it's a myth that we need to  
9           debunk. This does not take from non --  
10          non-incarcerated students.

11                      So this is an issue of educational  
12          equity. Since 1995, New York State has  
13          removed access to this opportunity, an  
14          opportunity that has proven not only as a  
15          need, as a benefit to marginalized  
16          communities -- I know personally the powerful  
17          benefits of education as being  
18          transformative. I am a formerly incarcerated  
19          woman. While in prison, I used education as  
20          a catalyst to that transformation.

21                      And not only education gave me the  
22          tools to navigate the many barriers that I  
23          have encountered in transitioning back into  
24          society, but it has equipped me -- it has

1 really -- it has really built me in order to  
2 understand the factors that led me into  
3 prison. So this has been transferred to my  
4 family and to my community. People that  
5 obtain an education are very much involved  
6 with civic engagement, because you want to  
7 give back that gift that was given to you.

8 So to me it is an urgent necessity.  
9 It affects mostly the people that are  
10 disproportionately represented in prison,  
11 which is black and brown communities. So I  
12 have seen, I have seen the effects of people  
13 obtaining their education inside. And I wish  
14 we could restore TAP as it was before 1995.

15 I think everybody goes into prison  
16 with already some trauma, but nobody leaves  
17 unaffected. So I think as a society we  
18 benefit from people leaving out with an  
19 education.

20 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you for  
21 being a strong advocate and example for the  
22 cause that you are advocating.

23 MS. GILESTRA: Yes.

24 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you for

1           being here. It's much appreciated.

2                   CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

3                   CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

4                   MS. GILESTRA: Thank you for the  
5           opportunity.

6                   CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Next, the  
7           Hispanic Federation, Diana Cruz, followed by  
8           Police Benevolent Association of New York,  
9           followed by Mac-Olivier Lalanne.

10                   MS. CRUZ: Thank you, Chairwoman  
11           Krueger, Chairwoman Weinstein and other  
12           committee members for taking the time to  
13           listen to the testimony drafted by Hispanic  
14           Federation. I know it's been a long day, so  
15           your presence and commitment is vital to the  
16           support for us to move forward the policies  
17           that we want to present.

18                   The Hispanic Federation is a nonprofit  
19           organization seeking to empower and advance  
20           the Hispanic community's programs and  
21           legislative advocacy. My name is Diana Cruz,  
22           and as the director of education policy for  
23           the Hispanic Federation, I am here to  
24           advocate for Latinx students in New York

1 State struggling to attain a postsecondary  
2 degree.

3 Currently New York State is failing to  
4 graduate Latinx students that are college and  
5 career ready. From 2007 to 2017, in New York  
6 City, Latinx young adults ages 18 to 24 have  
7 increased their college enrollment by 9  
8 percent, from 29 percent to 38 percent. In  
9 the same decade, the Latinx completion crisis  
10 has risen from 13 percent to 23 percent,  
11 demonstrating that the Latinx  
12 non-completion rate is growing slightly  
13 faster than the increase of college  
14 enrollment.

15 In order to address this, the Hispanic  
16 Federation strongly urges the Legislature to  
17 include and prioritize the following budget  
18 and legislative recommendations in their  
19 one-house budgets.

20 Starting with the Senator José Peralta  
21 New York State DREAM Act, the Hispanic  
22 Federation asks the Legislature to secure the  
23 same funding as last year of \$27 million to  
24 ensure undocumented students continue to have

1 access to higher education.

2 I know that we have heard from  
3 Dr. Linares earlier today, and he mentioned  
4 the number of students that have been  
5 applying to the DREAM Act. But approximately  
6 146,000 young people are eligible for state  
7 financial aid through the DREAM Act. It is  
8 our hope that as we develop more trust from  
9 the community, this opportunity will make  
10 students want to utilize this new path to  
11 receive financial aid.

12 However, it is important to  
13 acknowledge that unfortunately the  
14 undocumented and mixed-status families are  
15 still fearful and have misconceptions about  
16 what the DREAM Act entails. Further, school  
17 counselors and professionals are also  
18 confused on how to best help their students.  
19 HESC is using its resources to the best of  
20 its ability and yet does not have the  
21 capacity to create and implement a plan to  
22 educate families and educators on the  
23 New York State DREAM Act.

24 We strongly believe that HESC needs a

1 minimum of \$1 million to properly put the law  
2 into action and spearhead community outreach,  
3 along with CBOs to launch a statewide  
4 campaign to dispel misunderstandings about  
5 the New York State DREAM Act.

6           Moreover, HESC alone cannot provide  
7 enough outreach to communities and high  
8 schools. SUNY and CUNY must participate in  
9 increasing marketing and recruitment efforts  
10 to assist new students in understanding the  
11 DREAM Act. We ask that SUNY and CUNY receive  
12 \$500,000 to increase outreach and recruitment  
13 efforts.

14           When the Excelsior Scholarship came  
15 into effect, SUNY made clear efforts in  
16 marketing to assist new students in  
17 understanding the Excelsior Scholarship. It  
18 even explored the use of Smart Track targeted  
19 emails to assist scholarship recipients.  
20 Further, SUNY distributed information about  
21 the Excelsior Scholarship to more than 8,000  
22 high school students at college fairs.

23           We insist that both institutions  
24 provide intentional outreach to high school

1 and college students to guarantee the right  
2 understanding to apply for the New York State  
3 DREAM Act.

4           Additionally, as we have heard from a  
5 lot of other advocates here today,  
6 Opportunity Program funding has been proven  
7 to increase retention and graduation rates,  
8 especially for first-generation students.  
9 Many of those students are low-income  
10 students of color that need additional  
11 academic and financial supports to graduate  
12 college.

13           These programs change generational  
14 wealth disparities and in some cases set  
15 students up to be the first ones in their  
16 families to attain a college degree. We urge  
17 the legislation to allocate the necessary  
18 funding to these programs, and you can find a  
19 direct budget ask and recommendations in the  
20 testimony provided.

21           Moving forward, the shift in student  
22 demographics attending higher education  
23 demands institutions to take a closer look at  
24 developing resources and acknowledge how

1 representation in their faculty and staff  
2 also matters. Research studies consistently  
3 show that when students of color have faculty  
4 of color to learn from and lean on, the  
5 success of their educational outcomes  
6 increases dramatically.

7 We strongly support the creation of  
8 the SUNY Office of Diversity and Educational  
9 Equity and urge \$500,000 in funding to be  
10 allocated to SUNY for this purpose. This  
11 office will be tasked with drafting a report  
12 to the Governor and Legislature on diversity  
13 efforts that must include enrollment from  
14 underrepresented students, staff and faculty.

15 In summation, New York must continue  
16 to fund the Senator José Peralta New York  
17 State DREAM Act and invest in its  
18 implementation, as well as ensure that HESC  
19 and higher education institutions are  
20 receiving enough funding to educate and  
21 dispel misinformation to fearful undocumented  
22 communities.

23 Additionally, Opportunity Programs are  
24 specifically designed to benefit

1 first-generation college students. New York  
2 must increase the funding for these programs  
3 to end generational wealth inequities.

4 Lastly, as we acknowledge that student  
5 demographics become more diverse, there is a  
6 high need of a center that specializes in  
7 capturing data that reinforces diversity and  
8 inclusion.

9 I thank you for your time and  
10 re-emphasize how critical it is to prioritize  
11 this budget ask for the benefit of many  
12 students, communities and the whole state.

13 Thank you.

14 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.  
15 Thank you for being here.

16 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you very  
17 much.

18 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Next, the  
19 Police Benevolent Association of New York  
20 State, Ryan Law, PBA president and University  
21 Police Officers director.

22 MR. LAW: Good evening, respected  
23 members of the joint committee. My name is  
24 Ryan Law, and I am the director of the

1 University Police Officers and the current  
2 president of the Police Benevolent  
3 Association of New York State.

4 The PBA of New York State is a law  
5 enforcement labor union representing  
6 approximately 1200 members of the bargaining  
7 unit representing the New York State  
8 University Police, New York State  
9 Environmental Conservation Police, New York  
10 State Park Police, and New York State Forest  
11 Rangers.

12 I submitted a lengthy written  
13 testimony, but in the interests of time I  
14 will speak on the highlighted areas here.

15 The four units of the PBA are  
16 comprised of the second, third, fourth and  
17 fifth largest units of police officers  
18 employed in New York State. The officers  
19 live and work in your districts. We are  
20 keeping you, the students and staff of SUNY  
21 campuses, the visitors of our parks and other  
22 public lands, as well as New York State's  
23 natural resources, safe. We are all  
24 extraordinarily trained and have specialized

1 skill sets to respond to a crisis anywhere in  
2 the State of New York.

3 I am here today advocating for all  
4 four police agencies of the PBA, but as  
5 today's hearing is on higher education, I  
6 will focus on the PBA members who are  
7 New York State University Police Officers and  
8 the attrition crisis facing the departments  
9 they work for.

10 The dedicated men and women who have  
11 worked for New York State University Police  
12 protect students, staff and general campus  
13 communities of 29 of our SUNY campuses from  
14 Long Island to Buffalo, the Southern Tier and  
15 the North Country. That includes three  
16 campuses in New York City. If we don't have  
17 a campus in your district, we most certainly  
18 have one near it.

19 Gone are the days where SUNY campuses  
20 were staffed with unarmed peace officers.  
21 Today SUNY campuses are protected by  
22 professional police officers who are fully  
23 certified, trained and expect to protect  
24 campus communities from active shooters with

1 rifles to terrorists with even more dangerous  
2 weapons. We had a shooting with two deaths  
3 yesterday at Texas A&M University. These are  
4 serious, real concerns of ours.

5 We take our job to protect students  
6 and staff seriously. And if you have a child  
7 or a loved one attending or working on a SUNY  
8 campus, you can sleep better at night knowing  
9 we are going to defend these people with our  
10 lives.

11 There is, however, a notable weakness  
12 in the State University Police of our 29  
13 campuses, and that is our alarmingly high  
14 attrition rates. Specifically, I am talking  
15 about the constant resignations of recently  
16 hired young police officers who leave the  
17 New York State University Police to join  
18 other police departments, municipal or state,  
19 thereby creating vacancies in their  
20 respective University Police departments.

21 New York State University Police are  
22 bleeding officers at an astonishing rate,  
23 which is resulting in dangerous attrition  
24 numbers. The same applies to New York State

1 Park Police. Young, diverse officers fresh  
2 out of the Police Academy routinely leave PBA  
3 of NYS to join other law enforcement units  
4 that offer better pay, retirement and  
5 benefits.

6 Research conducted by the PBA of NYS  
7 indicates that over the last six years, a  
8 total of 410 officers left the University  
9 Police forces. One hundred eighteen of the  
10 total departing 410 UPOs specifically went to  
11 other law enforcement units at the state and  
12 local level. This is an astonishing  
13 attrition rate of over 30 percent.

14 The main factor in attrition rates for  
15 UPOs transferring to other law enforcement is  
16 the lack of a 20-year retirement option in  
17 the units represented by the PBA. The  
18 departments they are transferring to have  
19 20-year pensions. Attrition, however,  
20 fosters the development of other problems,  
21 such as diversity. Unfortunately, as  
22 research indicates, the attrition trend lines  
23 are moving in the wrong direction and are  
24 becoming more severe.

1                   Yes, there is a cost to the 20-year  
2                   retirement legislation for this unit, but the  
3                   savings from the stemming of attrition will  
4                   offset that. New York State spends between  
5                   \$100,000 and \$120,000, depending on location,  
6                   to hire, train and equip just one officer  
7                   from the academy to their first year of  
8                   service. Simple math reveals a total  
9                   attrition cost of over \$12 million,  
10                  significantly offsetting the fiscal costs of  
11                  this bill.

12                 More importantly than the cost savings  
13                 are the intangibles. SUNY campuses, like  
14                 other educational institutions, are  
15                 considered potentially vulnerable to active  
16                 shooters and terrorists. If we can't have  
17                 stable and well-staffed police departments,  
18                 how can these departments adequately protect  
19                 SUNY communities? They can't. And the high  
20                 attrition rate is a public safety issue that  
21                 must be addressed.

22                 There's also a diversity issue here.  
23                 Competitive pay and benefits are invaluable  
24                 to retain and recruit female officers as well

1 as young UPOs of color. New York State takes  
2 great pride in the diversity of its SUNY  
3 campuses and system. Shouldn't SUNY police  
4 officers reflect the campuses they serve?  
5 With the current substandard 20-year pension,  
6 SUNY campuses are at a point that they have  
7 poorly staffed police departments and lack  
8 diversity.

9 I want to thank the Legislature for  
10 understanding this and effectively addressing  
11 it. Last year the Senate and Assembly  
12 overwhelmingly passed Senate 5207-Gounardes,  
13 same as Assembly 4431-Abate, which would have  
14 provided the PBA members a 20-year retirement  
15 plan. This body addressed the dangers of  
16 unstable SUNY police forces and their lack of  
17 diversity but, sadly and inexplicably,  
18 Governor Cuomo vetoed the bill -- see Veto  
19 Message 265 of 2019.

20 The legislation was simply about  
21 parity, safety and diversity as New York  
22 State Troopers and over 400 statewide  
23 municipal police forces who are currently  
24 entitled to a 20-year retirement plan. You

1           also passed and the Governor also vetoed the  
2           PBA's three-quarter accidental disability  
3           bill and the SUNY heart bill, which also  
4           harmed our morale and ultimately affects  
5           attrition losses as well.

6                         In closing, the PBA of New York State  
7           encourages the Legislature to provide  
8           University Police, Park Police, Forest  
9           Rangers and Environmental Conservation  
10          Officers with the proper tools and give us  
11          parity with other law enforcement, such as a  
12          20-year retirement and three-quarters  
13          accidental disability benefits. This will  
14          assure the PBA of NYS can continue to keep  
15          the public safe and maximize the public  
16          safety to take advantage of New York State's  
17          natural beauty.

18                        CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

19                        We have a question from the Senate.

20                        CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: We have two  
21          questions from the Senate.

22                        Senator Toby Stavisky.

23                        SENATOR STAVISKY: One question. I  
24          raised the issue of the attrition rate with

1 the chancellor, and she was not familiar with  
2 it. And I promised to get her the material.

3 MR. LAW: Okay.

4 SENATOR STAVISKY: Okay? Maybe you  
5 want to reach out as a result.

6 MR. LAW: Can I comment on that  
7 quickly?

8 SENATOR STAVISKY: Excuse me?

9 MR. LAW: Can I comment on that  
10 quickly?

11 SENATOR STAVISKY: Sure -- no, I -- I  
12 want the relationship to be a positive one  
13 between the police and the SUNY  
14 administration.

15 MR. LAW: I have a very positive  
16 comment.

17 SENATOR STAVISKY: Good.

18 MR. LAW: We did -- we were aware of  
19 the testimony from earlier today. I  
20 appreciate you raising that. And we did  
21 reach out to the chancellor's office today,  
22 and about an hour ago I heard back from the  
23 chancellor's office, who stated that she will  
24 be making an effort as early as tomorrow to

1 reach out to us, or us to reach out to her,  
2 to make a meeting.

3 SENATOR STAVISKY: Good. Good.

4 MR. LAW: Thank you.

5 SENATOR STAVISKY: Glad to hear that.

6 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Senator John Liu.

7 SENATOR LIU: Thank you, Madam Chair.

8 Thank you for testifying today. I

9 know you've been waiting all --

10 (Mic off; discussion off the record.)

11 SENATOR LIU: There you go. I didn't

12 even touch anything.

13 But I just wanted to thank you for  
14 your testimony. Obviously we have -- we have  
15 a lot of activity on college campuses  
16 nowadays, and SUNY is not -- it continues to  
17 be a hotbed of activism.

18 So I recognize the sometimes very  
19 difficult job that your members do to keep  
20 peace on campus while allowing students as  
21 much freedom as possible. And so I certainly  
22 support your attempts at parity, recognizing  
23 the very difficult work that you and your  
24 members do.

1 Thank you.

2 MR. LAW: Thank you very much.

3 Appreciate it.

4 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you for  
5 being here.

6 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

7 MR. LAW: Thank you all.

8 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Our next and  
9 final speaker, Mac-Olivier Lalanne, who I  
10 understand traveled here from Plattsburgh to  
11 be with us tonight.

12 MR. LALANNE: Actually, that was a  
13 quick run-down.

14 There was like a technical difficulty  
15 with me printing the copies, so if you see  
16 anything missing, I apologize for that.

17 And there's also -- not to repeat like  
18 stuff that people said beforehand, which is  
19 kind of most of the stuff I said on my  
20 testimony, so I can put some additions and  
21 summarize, since I have a short amount of  
22 time. So I'm going to start now.

23 (Laughter.)

24 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Okay.

1                   MR. LALANNE: Good evening, members of  
2                   the Assembly and the Senate. My name is  
3                   Mac-Olivier Lalanne. I am currently a  
4                   sophomore at SUNY Plattsburgh, and I reside  
5                   in Brooklyn, New York. I am here to testify  
6                   on the need of funding for our college and  
7                   universities on behalf of students like me  
8                   attending college or preparing to attend  
9                   college.

10                  First I want to say thank you for your  
11                  efforts to invest your time, money, and  
12                  energy to help us students get into college,  
13                  and thank you for allowing me to testify.

14                  Next, I would like to say that  
15                  although we appreciate the effort, we all  
16                  believe that more can be done. Every year,  
17                  colleges and universities tend to increase  
18                  their tuition and fees, which the students  
19                  tend to go through tough decisions on either  
20                  continuing their education, apply and get a  
21                  private loan to pay the increase, despite the  
22                  consequences, in hopes to get an education,  
23                  get a job to pay for the increase, serve in  
24                  the Army via ROTC, or leave school. And the

1 list goes on.

2 During my time as a student, I have  
3 physically witnessed times departments within  
4 SUNY Plattsburgh have come over and talked  
5 about their budget and the importance of  
6 increasing their fees -- at which I was also  
7 a senator for the Student Association. And  
8 students were outraged, especially when the  
9 fitness or the recreation fee -- the  
10 Recreation Department came over to the  
11 student meeting, and the fee was approved  
12 through the SUNY Board of Trustees --  
13 students were outraged and even blamed the  
14 Student Association for it despite the fact  
15 that we had no power to approve the fee.

16 One thing that I believe is worth  
17 considering is expanding the Excelsior  
18 Scholarship and also the TAP, the state aid,  
19 which I've -- to make it affordable for  
20 people regardless of where the student goes.  
21 Which as students who -- someone who goes to  
22 CUNY benefits from the scholarship more than  
23 a student who goes to SUNY. As we all know,  
24 the Excelsior Scholarship replaces the

1 financial aid that the students are going to  
2 obtain.

3 Another thing to consider is investing  
4 on a plan that would ensure students to pay  
5 off financial holds in their student  
6 accounts, as I too have seen many students  
7 who want to apply to classes next semester  
8 but can't do so because they have a hold in  
9 their account, thus penalizing and exploiting  
10 students to pay off the hold or risk not  
11 going to class or even school the next  
12 semester, which is not fair for those who  
13 suffer from financial difficulties or  
14 hardships.

15 Another thing I would say -- oh, I'm  
16 sorry. Another thing that you all should  
17 consider is granting aid for colleges and  
18 universities when it comes to diversity and  
19 inclusion, as I feel that yes, anyone can go  
20 to college after high school, there is a lack  
21 of diverse people and cultures which,  
22 depending on the location of the college,  
23 there is little to no resource or a voice for  
24 the misrepresented people.

1           During my times as a college student,  
2           I have heard stories and incidents that  
3           students like me have faced. To summarize it  
4           all up, college administrations throughout  
5           New York State didn't quite do a good job on  
6           addressing issues concerning racial issues or  
7           that involved misrepresented people. I know  
8           my school isn't the only one which --  
9           actually, one example is that -- which is a  
10          true story.

11           A year before I came in, which was the  
12          year of two thousand -- well, the year I came  
13          in was 2018. But in 2017 there was a  
14          Snapchat incident which, to summarize it, was  
15          a student that kind of like -- there was a  
16          student that is currently not in school  
17          posted like a social media post that was kind  
18          of insensitive towards the black community in  
19          the school.

20           The administration didn't really quite  
21          do a good job and -- which led to like the  
22          school revitalizing the administration to  
23          include a diversity and inclusion position,  
24          to create a community room for unrepresented

1 people, and the list goes on.

2 Thank you for allowing me and other  
3 people to testify, and I hope this  
4 legislative session goes well for you all.

5 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

6 Senator Krueger.

7 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Just one  
8 question.

9 So in your testimony you talk about  
10 that the college that I think you're at is  
11 not necessarily handling diversity and  
12 differences that well. But you also say you  
13 think that CUNY students' aid goes further  
14 than SUNY students'. I don't think there's a  
15 difference. So can you clarify that for me?

16 MR. LALANNE: Well, because like for  
17 the -- for like the Excelsior Scholarship,  
18 like you will benefit more because like for  
19 CUNY, people get to commute through -- like  
20 if I would, say, go to Brooklyn College,  
21 currently my time, I could like literally  
22 just like commute through the train and won't  
23 really cause as much of a problem.

24 But if I were to go to like a SUNY, it

1           would like deny all of my financial aid and  
2           then I would have to pay all of the fees  
3           for -- because I am also a on-campus student.

4           CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Okay. So I guess  
5           I'll leave it there for tonight. Because I  
6           didn't think we had different standards --  
7           just the room and board difference --

8           MR. LALANNE: Yes, room and board and  
9           fees.

10          CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: -- not the other  
11          amounts.

12          Okay, thank you very much. Thank you  
13          for your testimony.

14          CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.  
15          Just a quick question. What part of Brooklyn  
16          are you from?

17          MR. LALANNE: I am from Crown Heights.

18          CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Okay. So  
19          walking distance to Medgar Evers, and you  
20          went all the way upstate.

21          (Laughter.)

22          MR. LALANNE: Yup.

23          CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Okay. Well,  
24          you're getting a good education. Thank you

1           so much for being here and helping to be the  
2           face of the students that we are working to  
3           make sure can succeed at college. Thank you.

4                   CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

5                   MR. LALANNE: And also I actually  
6           didn't read this in my testimony, which --  
7           sorry to hold the time over. I would also  
8           like to consider more aid and funding when it  
9           comes to food pantries and also more aid and  
10          funding when it comes to the civic engagement  
11          and voter participation, as I feel like yes,  
12          colleges can grant students those services,  
13          but voter registration there is not  
14          completely enough for those types of  
15          services.

16                   CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

17                   CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

18                   CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: So thank you  
19          for being here, and feel free to -- you  
20          can -- everybody, not just you -- people can  
21          have up to seven days after the hearing ends  
22          to submit additional testimony or new  
23          testimony if they haven't yet done so.

24                   So this concludes the Higher Education

1 hearing. The joint budget committees will be  
2 reconvening at 9:30 tomorrow morning for the  
3 Workforce Development budget hearing and at  
4 noon for the Housing budget hearing.

5 Thank you.

6 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

7 (Whereupon, the budget hearing concluded  
8 at 6:02 p.m.)

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