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**Testimony to the New York State Assembly Ways and Means and
Senate Finance Committees-Higher Education Hearing**

Submitted By: Michael A. Molina, President

Monday February 8, 2016
Legislative Office Building
Hearing Room C
Albany, New York

On behalf of CSTEP and STEP programs and students throughout New York State, I want to first thank legislative leaders for giving CSTEP and STEP programs its first funding increase since 2006 this year. The 15% increase you provided has been instrumental in providing our students and their families with the academic and non-academic services needed for them to prepare for careers in STEM, health and licensed fields.

Today, I ask for your continued support of CSTEP and STEP programs, so that we may be able to provide our students with the resources, services and activities they to be successful in highly competitive fields. Specifically we request the following:

- We request an additional 30% in funding of \$6.7 million for current STEP and CSTEP programs for a total of \$29 million so that additional students may be served by those programs. As you know, the Executive Budget has recommended level funding for 2017.
- We also request additional funding of \$6 million to restore funding to approximately 14 highly effective CSTEP and STEP programs that submitted successful proposals but were not funded due to lack of sufficient funding. Restoring the funding for these programs will allow us to serve an additional 3,000 to 4,000 students.
- We ask that serious consideration be given to doubling the enrollment of CSTEP and STEP along with all of the opportunity programs in the next five years, in order to meet the need for our services.

CSTEP and STEP continue to be among New York State's most successful education programs. Each year, the programs meet their mission to increase minority and disadvantaged student representation in STEM, health and licensed fields in New York State. CSTEP programs provide academic enrichment and support, mentoring, academic and career counseling, internships and research opportunities, standardized test preparation and career activities and services. Over 70% of CSTEP graduates pursue professional degree programs of study in STEM and CSTEP targeted fields.

CSTEP graduated 15,533 students from independent, SUNY, CUNY and two-year community colleges from 1986 to 2012. Most of these graduates live in New York State and work in high paying STEM, health and licensed fields that contribute to our tax base. As New York State continues to build its STEM centered industrial base, increased CSTEP/STEP funding will help to produce the STEM professionals that are vital to the economic vitality of our state.

Through 2010, CSTEP programs have served 95,985 students since its creation by the Legislature in 1986. There are currently forty-nine (49) programs throughout New York State with an approximate enrollment of 5,700 students.

STEP programs graduated 23,763 students from 1986 to 2012. The programs served 146,005 students during this period. There are currently 54 STEP programs serving approximately 8,000 students.

STEP programs provide academic enrichment in science and mathematics content areas. They also provide academic, career and financial aid counseling, standardized test preparation, college admissions counseling and research training and internships.

CSTEP and STEP are nationally recognized programs that have made New York State a leader in preparing talented students for careers in STEM, health and licensed fields. CSTEP and STEP are the 2004 recipient of the National Science Foundation Presidential Medal of Excellence for Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring. We have developed a statewide internship program for CSTEP students with Brookhaven National Laboratory. Our students have received recognition for their scholarly research and presentations and among our graduates are Rhodes and Fulbright Scholars.

In light of the multi-billion dollar budget surplus, I appeal to you for your support in increasing CSTEP/STEP funding by 30% to 6.7 million to \$29 million in order to serve an additional 3,000 additional students. We also ask for an additional \$6 million to restore funding to 14 CSTEP and STEP programs not funded due to a lack of sufficient funding.

CSTEP programs are among the most effective and efficient educational programs in New York State with a twenty-nine year record of success and achievement. Your consideration and support of our requests will help us to enroll more students, and provide them with the resources and services they need in their journey to success.

Respectfully submitted,

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