

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
5 2023-2024 EXECUTIVE BUDGET ON
6 HIGHER EDUCATION

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

9 February 27, 2023
10 11:38 a.m.

11 PRESIDING:

12 Senator Liz Krueger
13 Chair, Senate Finance Committee

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

16 PRESENT:

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

19 Assemblywoman Patricia Fahy
20 Chair, Assembly Higher Education Committee

21 Senator Toby Stavisky
22 Chair, Senate Higher Education Committee

23 Senator Joseph A. Griffo
24 Senate Higher Education Committee (RM)

Assemblywoman Rodneyse Bichotte Hermelyn

Assemblyman Michael J. Norris

Senator John C. Liu

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3 PRESENT: (Continued)

4 Assemblywoman Jo Anne Simon

5 Senator Kevin Thomas

6 Assemblywoman Rebecca A. Seawright

7 Assemblywoman Alicia Hyndman

8 Assemblyman Harvey Epstein

9 Senator Andrew Gounardes

10 Assemblywoman Marianne Buttenschon

11 Senator Robert Jackson

12 Assemblyman William Colton

13 Assemblyman Robert Smullen

14 Senator Lea Webb

15 Assemblyman Al Stirpe

16 Assemblywoman Monique Chandler-Waterman

17 Assemblyman Kenny Burgos

18 Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal

19 Assemblyman Brian D. Miller

20 Assemblywoman Monica P. Wallace

21 Senator Dean Murray

22 Assemblywoman Phara Souffrant Forrest

23 Assemblyman Garrett Gandolfo

24 Senator Iwen Chu

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3 PRESENT: (Continued)

4 Assemblywoman Chris Eachus

5 Assemblywoman Karen McMahon

6 Assemblyman Brian Manktelow

7 Assemblywoman Donna A. Lupardo

8 Assemblywoman Sarah Clark

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12 LIST OF SPEAKERS

13 STATEMENT QUESTIONS

14 Dr. John B. King, Jr.
 Chancellor

15 State University of New York
 -and-

16 Félix V. Matos Rodríguez
 Chancellor

17 City University of New York 11 28

18 Betty A. Rosa
 Commissioner

19 NYS Education Department 152 158

20 Dr. Guillermo Linares
 President

21 NYS Higher Education
 Services Corporation

22 (HESC) 219 281

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3 LIST OF SPEAKERS, Cont.

4 STATEMENT QUESTIONS

5 Dr. James Davis
President
6 Professional Staff Congress/CUNY
-and-
7 Dr. Frederick E. Kowal
President
8 United University Professions
-and-
9 Andrew Sako
President
10 Faculty Federation
of Erie Community College
11 -and-
James McCartney
12 Director
NYS University Police Lieutenants
13 Benevolent Association
President
14 PBA of New York State
-and-
15 Andrew Dobbyn
State President
16 CWA 1104-GSEU

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3 LIST OF SPEAKERS, Cont.

4 STATEMENT QUESTIONS

5	Dr. Renaldo D. Alba President		
6	Association of Program Administrators for CSTEP and		
7	STEP, Inc. (APACS)		
	-and-		
8	Samuel Rowser Executive Director		
9	On Point for College		
	-and-		
10	Lola W. Brabham President		
11	Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities		
12	(CICU)		
	-and-		
13	Liz Altman President		
14	Friends of the NYS Liberty Partnerships, Inc.		
15	-and-		
	Deidra Nesbeth		
16	Director		
	Fostering Youth Success		
17	Initiative	312	331
18	Emily Miles Executive Director		
19	NYC Alliance Against Sexual Assault		
20	-and-		
	Niharika Rao		
21	Lead Organizer		
	Reproductive Justice		
22	Collective New York		
	-and-		
23	Robb Friedlander Director of Advocacy		
24	Swipe Out Hunger	371	381

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3 LIST OF SPEAKERS, Cont.

4 STATEMENT QUESTIONS

5 Dr. Melanie Bernitz
Senior Vice President
6 Columbia Health
-and-

7 Blair Horner
Executive Director
8 New York Public Interest
Research Group (NYPIRG)

9 -and-
Donna Stelling-Gurnett
10 President

Association of Private
11 Colleges (APC)
-and-

12 Nicole Livanos
Director, State Affairs
13 National Council of State
Boards of Nursing

397 412

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1 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Good morning.

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

5 Today we begin the 10th in a series of
6 hearings conducted by the joint fiscal
7 committees of the Legislature regarding the
8 Governor's proposed budget for fiscal year
9 2023-'24. The hearings are conducted
10 pursuant to the New York State Constitution
11 and Legislative Law. And today our joint
12 committees will hear testimony concerning the
13 Governor's proposed budget for higher
14 education.

15 So I will now introduce the members of
16 the Assembly who are here. And then the
17 cochair of today's hearing, Senator Liz
18 Krueger, chair of the Senate Finance
19 Committee, will introduce her colleagues.
20 And then our rankers will introduce their
21 respective colleagues.

22 So first we have Assemblywoman Fahy,
23 the chair of our Higher Ed Committee;
24 Assemblywoman Bichotte Hermelyn,

1 Assemblywoman Buttenschon, Assemblyman
2 Epstein, Assemblywoman Forrest, Assemblywoman
3 Seawright, Assemblywoman Simon, and
4 Assemblyman Stirpe.

5 So, Senator Krueger?

6 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you very
7 much, Helene.

8 Good morning, everyone. I will be
9 starting with Senator Stavisky, the chair of
10 Higher Ed; Senator Thomas, Senator Chu,
11 Senator Webb, Senator Gounardes, Senator Liu,
12 Senator Hoylman -- sorry, he has a new last
13 name. Sigal, Hoylman-Sigal. And Senator
14 Jackson.

15 And I'm going to turn it over to the
16 Higher Education ranker, Joe Griffo, to
17 introduce Republican members.

18 SENATOR GRIFFO: And I would introduce
19 Senator Dean Murray, who is with us here
20 today too.

21 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Sitting in
22 today as our ranker on Ways and Means,
23 Assemblyman Norris.

24 ASSEMBLYMAN NORRIS: Thank you, Madam

1 Chair.

2 And I would like to introduce the
3 ranker of Higher Ed, Assemblyman Robert
4 Smullen. We also have Member Jared Gandolfo
5 here, and also Member Brian Miller. Thank
6 you for being here.

7 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

8 So -- and people should know that
9 there will be some of our colleagues joining
10 us as the hearing proceeds.

11 So just some ground rules before we
12 get going. Governmental witnesses will have
13 10 minutes to present testimony.
14 Nongovernmental witnesses will have three
15 minutes to present testimony. And actually,
16 for the nongovernmental witnesses, if you
17 have not checked in at the desk on the second
18 floor, if you could do that once we get
19 started so that we know that you are here.

20 In terms of asking questions, the
21 chairs of the respective committees -- in
22 this case, the Higher Ed chairs -- and
23 Senator Krueger and myself will each have
24 10 minutes to ask questions. The chairs can

1 get a second round of three minutes. The
2 rankers will have five minutes to ask
3 questions, no second round. All other
4 members have three minutes to ask questions.

5 And what is very important for my
6 colleagues to know is that the time limits
7 are both for the questions and the answers.
8 So when the clocks -- and they're visible --
9 when the clocks go down to 20 seconds, don't
10 say "I have one more question" and not leave
11 time for our witnesses to answer.

12 Just as a reminder for both
13 legislators and observers and witnesses,
14 there are no PowerPoint presentations,
15 placards or signs permitted in the hearing
16 room.

17 With that, we are ready to start our
18 actual hearing to hear from some of our
19 witnesses, and we start with the chancellors
20 of both SUNY and CUNY. You each will have 10
21 minutes, and then there will be questions
22 from the panel.

23 So our new chancellor of SUNY, no
24 stranger to New York in education, Chancellor

1 John King, Jr., and our chancellor of CUNY,
2 Félix Rodríguez, who's been here a number of
3 times. So since you're listed -- SUNY is
4 listed first on the witness list, so let's
5 start with SUNY.

6 And just for both of you but for
7 everybody who's testifying today, your
8 testimony has been submitted. All of the
9 legislators have your testimony. It's been
10 posted already on the Senate's website. It
11 will be posted on the Assembly's website
12 today if it's not already posted.

13 So please try and summarize or hit
14 your high points. People think, particularly
15 those when you have three minutes and you
16 start reading, you never get past the
17 introductions and then the clock runs. So we
18 don't need a lot of thank-yous; we want to
19 hear just what you'd like to tell us about
20 the budget.

21 So with that, Chancellor King, if you
22 can begin.

23 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Thanks so much.
24 Good morning, chairs and ranking members.

1 I'm John King, and I have the privilege of
2 serving as the 15th chancellor for the State
3 University of New York. And I appreciate the
4 opportunity to share the ways in which SUNY
5 students, faculty and staff are benefiting
6 from the investments made by the Executive
7 and the Legislature in the last year, and to
8 discuss Governor Hochul's Executive Budget
9 proposal with you today.

10 You know, since I began as chancellor
11 on January 9th, I'm often asked what drew me
12 to this opportunity. Without question, it is
13 the vision set forth by the Governor and the
14 Board of Trustees to ensure that, with
15 legislative support, SUNY is the most
16 accessible, most affordable, and best state
17 system of public higher ed in the country.
18 As we prepare to celebrate our 75th
19 anniversary, I'm proud that this Executive
20 Budget reflects a once-in-a-generation
21 opportunity to further SUNY's legacy of
22 equity and excellence.

23 As some of you know, I'm only here
24 today because of the role public education

1 played in my life. Both my parents were
2 career New York City public school educators.
3 They both passed away when I was a kid -- my
4 mom when I was 8, and my dad when I was 12.
5 In the time when it was just my dad and me,
6 my dad was struggling with Alzheimer's, and
7 home was incredibly difficult, scary,
8 unstable. And the thing that saved me was
9 school. School was the one place in my life
10 that was safe, supportive, and nurturing.
11 And from being a classroom teacher to serving
12 as United States Secretary of Education for
13 President Obama, I have always focused
14 throughout my career on maximizing
15 opportunity for all students.

16 Now it is my priority to empower all
17 students to thrive on our SUNY campuses. To
18 that end, four pillars guide our work:
19 student success; research and scholarship;
20 diversity, equity, and inclusion; and
21 economic development and upward mobility for
22 our students.

23 My remarks today will underscore how
24 state investment lays the foundation for

1 SUNY's success. Among my highest priorities
2 early on has been to visit all 64 campuses --
3 16 down, 48 to go. Each stop has been an
4 opportunity to spend time with students,
5 faculty, campus leaders, employer partners,
6 and community members.

7 Our students are extraordinary. It's
8 been powerful to hear their stories,
9 especially the stories of first-generation
10 college students, about the difference SUNY
11 is making in their lives. At campus after
12 campus, I've heard from students who are
13 participating in our Educational Opportunity
14 Program or who've participated in our
15 Educational Opportunity Centers, who describe
16 the difference SUNY is making in their lives
17 and the access it's providing them to
18 economic opportunity.

19 Our shared success requires that SUNY
20 rise to complex challenges, to ensure
21 opportunity for all of our students, to
22 compete for world-class faculty who represent
23 the diversity of our students, to expand our
24 academic options at every level, to align our

1 programming with regional economic
2 development needs, and to provide the
3 wraparound services students need, not just
4 to start college but to finish.

5 In her first State of the State
6 address a year ago, Governor Hochul unveiled
7 a plan for SUNY's transformation. With your
8 partnership, the enacted budget included
9 historic investments. For example,
10 \$60 million was invested in enrollment
11 initiatives and student success, which is
12 already translating into new initiatives on
13 campuses, flexible seven-week schedules to
14 help working adults complete their degrees,
15 transportation support so that students can
16 get to class; \$53 million for new faculty
17 that's helping us to attract world-class,
18 diverse faculty members, and to reverse a
19 longstanding trend of having to turn away
20 students away from important programs like
21 engineering and nursing because of a lack of
22 faculty.

23 This year's Executive Budget builds on
24 last year's foundation with bold investments

1 to encourage student success and ensure that
2 SUNY provides the best possible educational
3 experience. Vital investments in the
4 Executive Budget would include the
5 \$53 million for faculty hiring and the
6 \$60 million for enrollment initiatives
7 continuing; \$75 million for a
8 Transformational Initiatives Fund that will
9 help support innovative workforce development
10 programs; \$200 million for a Digital
11 Transformation that will help provide a
12 long-overdue investment to improve the
13 student experience, make it easier for
14 students to enroll, to transfer credits, to
15 access financial aid and other resources; a
16 \$1.5 billion research endowment for
17 University Centers, which will bring
18 tremendous returns in additional federal
19 research dollars and new economic development
20 opportunities; the important community
21 college funding floor, which has been a
22 life-preserver for many campuses; and
23 increased capital funding.

24 The Executive Budget also makes two

1 proposals with respect to tuition that would
2 yield \$97 million per year. These proposals
3 recognize that our campuses need resources at
4 a time when costs are rising and students
5 need more support than ever. There are two
6 parts to the proposal. One is rational and
7 predictable tuition for our campuses, which
8 will help to provide academic programs and
9 wraparound services. The second component is
10 differential tuition for our University
11 Centers, which recognizes their unique needs
12 as they recruit world-class faculty to
13 provide world-class research opportunities
14 for students and contribute to the state's
15 economic development.

16 I want to emphasize that no one offers
17 as high-quality an education as affordably
18 around the country as SUNY and our partners
19 at CUNY. Indeed, 53 percent of all SUNY
20 students attend tuition-free, and half
21 graduate debt-free. The Governor's proposal
22 will sustain that figure because the
23 Executive Budget provides that TAP and
24 Excelsior would increase to cover additional

1 tuition costs. So those SUNY students who
2 receive full TAP awards or Excelsior
3 scholarships will not pay any additional
4 tuition.

5 SUNY respectfully asks our champions
6 in the Legislature to accept all the SUNY
7 investments proposed in the Executive Budget.
8 I appreciate the opportunity to discuss the
9 needs of SUNY's students, faculty and staff
10 with you today. I thank you for all the
11 measures you've championed over the years to
12 ensure that every New York student finds a
13 home and success at SUNY.

14 And I'd be pleased to answer any
15 questions.

16 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

17 Chancellor Rodríguez.

18 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: Is
19 this on?

20 Good morning, chairs and members of
21 the Assembly and the Senate, staff, guests,
22 my good friend Chancellor King too. Thank
23 you so much for the opportunity to testify
24 this morning. I'm especially excited to

1 testify in person after two years of virtual
2 Executive Budget hearings.

3 I am extremely humble and honored to
4 lead the premier and largest urban public
5 university in the United States, now
6 celebrating our 175th anniversary, with a
7 community of over 220,000 degree-seeking
8 students, over 150,000 students in adult and
9 continuing education programs, 18,350
10 faculty, and 21,800 staff at our 25 campuses.

11 On behalf of the entire CUNY
12 community, I want to thank Governor Hochul,
13 the State Senate and the State Assembly for
14 your sustained support.

15 CUNY continues to distinguish itself
16 and be recognized for our quality,
17 affordability, and inspirational record as an
18 engine of upwards mobility for our students
19 and their families and, by extension, the
20 city and the state. Recent accolades include
21 Hostos and Kingsborough community colleges
22 have reached the final round of 10 in their
23 quest for the prestigious 2023 Aspen Prize
24 for Community College Excellence, regarded by

1 many as the highest recognition for community
2 college achievement in the nation. We will
3 celebrate in April when one of them wins the
4 prize.

5 Six CUNY senior colleges were among
6 the top-performing public colleges in the
7 northern United States in the 2022 U.S. News
8 rankings, and seven CUNY colleges were among
9 the top 20 public universities.

10 Ten CUNY colleges were among the
11 nation's best in promoting economic mobility,
12 according to Third Way, a public policy think
13 tank that is creating an Economic Mobility
14 Index for students from low- and
15 moderate-income families.

16 At the same time, CUNY continues to
17 demonstrate the transformational impact we
18 have on almost every aspect of life in
19 New York. To cite just one recent example,
20 Chancellor Banks and I announced a
21 groundbreaking \$14 million partnership to
22 train thousands of current and future public
23 school teachers to deliver practical computer
24 science and data literacy skills to their

1 students. We believe it's the largest effort
2 of its kind in the nation.

3 Often overlooked, meanwhile, is CUNY's
4 excellence as a research powerhouse propelled
5 by more than 10,000 researchers with staff,
6 with growing support from public and private
7 funders. Our recent grants through the first
8 half of the fiscal year already amount to
9 \$417 million. If this trend continues, we
10 will end the fiscal year with the largest
11 amount of external research funding in our
12 history. All told, we have more than 2,100
13 research grants for projects that are being
14 carried out by our faculty and staff.

15 All this is even more impressive
16 because of CUNY's diversity. In 2022, the
17 City of New York Graduate Center was found to
18 be the second-most gender diverse of the
19 nation's Research 1 institutions.
20 Additionally, 20 percent of the Graduate
21 Center's full-time graduate students identify
22 as underrepresented minorities. CUNY is
23 clearly a national powerhouse in educating
24 diverse Ph.D. students.

1 CUNY, like so many institutions of
2 higher learning, has faced enrollment
3 challenges consistent with nationwide
4 pandemic trends. We have all hands on deck
5 working on this area, doubling down on CUNY's
6 long history of expanding access to
7 higher ed. We opened the semester with a
8 wonderful announcement about CUNY Reconnect,
9 our initiative to reengage thousands of
10 New Yorkers who began college but stopped out
11 before they completed a degree.

12 The initiative was championed by
13 City Council Speaker Adrienne Adams and
14 funded by the city, and I am happy to report
15 that more than 16,000 students have signed up
16 for classes through the program this academic
17 year, surpassing our goal of enrolling 10,000
18 returning students.

19 CUNY Reconnect and various enrollment
20 analytics have taught us a lot about what
21 works and how our systems can be improved to
22 increase enrollment and retention. Those
23 lessons led us to create a large advertising
24 campaign with the tag line "Degrees Without

1 The Debt," and this is running on subways,
2 buses, billboards, ferries, and taxis with
3 impressive results in the numbers of visitors
4 to our CUNY Apply website.

5 Another initiative that will help
6 address enrollment and retention is the
7 enhancement and expansion of CUNY Online, the
8 university's in-house solution to increased
9 online educational opportunities. CUNY
10 Online will provide a robust, high-quality
11 online program portfolio in high-demand areas
12 with online wraparound student services.

13 The initiatives I have described above
14 are all being undertaken to realize CUNY's
15 fullest potential to uplift New York. CUNY
16 is indispensable as we recover and
17 rebuild communities, especially those that
18 were disproportionately impacted by the
19 pandemic. Nearly 80 percent of our
20 undergraduate students are students of color:
21 23 percent are Asian or Pacific Islander,
22 26 percent are Black, and 30 percent are
23 Latino. More than 80 percent of CUNY's
24 graduates stay in New York and contribute to

1 the city's economic, civic and cultural life.
2 Half of our undergraduate students come from
3 households with less than \$30,000 in annual
4 income, 45 percent of our students are the
5 first in their family to attend college, and
6 50 percent work while going to school.

7 We have increased our focus on
8 equipping students to engage the workforce
9 and strengthen our career pathways. We are
10 forging new public and private partnerships
11 like the CUNY Inclusive Economy initiative,
12 which aims to connect 80 percent of CUNY
13 graduates to careers by the end of the
14 decade. And of course we know the impact
15 that paid internships have on our students'
16 success -- more students who graduate sooner,
17 who have job offers and earn higher wages.

18 We have expanded all these
19 opportunities with private support and
20 funding from the state and the city, but we
21 need your help, as more still needs to be
22 done.

23 CUNY students and graduates staff some
24 of our city's most critical workforce

1 sectors, including nurses and teachers. Each
2 year CUNY graduates about 1,800 nurses --
3 about half of all new nurses in the city in a
4 typical year. The university also awards
5 more than 5,000 degrees and certificates in
6 education and supplies a third of new
7 teachers for the New York City Public
8 Schools. According to a recent report from
9 the Center for an Urban Future, in one year,
10 2019, CUNY graduated more Black and Latino
11 students with tech degrees than all
12 undergraduate degrees awarded by our sister
13 institution Columbia University in that year.
14 CUNY's impact on New York City's talent base
15 simply cannot be ignored.

16 Because we educate the workforce of
17 today and that of the future, we recognize
18 the need for additional financial support to
19 educate STEM students. Educating students in
20 these vital and fast-growing STEM and health
21 care areas is more expensive than educating
22 students in other areas. In 2021-'22, about
23 42 percent of CUNY's enrollment was in STEM
24 or health disciplines. Faculty costs are

1 estimated at 33 percent higher in those
2 fields. Other costs include lab equipment,
3 lab sections and higher faculty-student
4 ratios.

5 We are also modernizing the university
6 and transforming our operations through
7 enhanced technology. We are replacing and
8 migrating our core Enterprise Resource
9 Planning functions to modern cloud solutions.
10 We are also replacing and migrating our
11 learning management system and implementing a
12 new CRM system. Even as we transform, we'll
13 engage in a multifaceted cybersecurity
14 initiative to identify and protect against
15 potential risks that threaten the
16 university's IT assets.

17 I would be remiss if I did not deal
18 with the structural deficits CUNY is facing.
19 They are primarily due to decreases in
20 enrollment and related tuition revenue, as
21 well as historic underfunding of mandatory
22 cost increases. We are doing our part to
23 help mitigate these deficits.

24 One example -- among many -- of our

1 efforts is the Efficiencies for Reinvestment
2 and Innovation, designed to produce greater
3 efficiencies and cost savings for CUNY. So
4 far, the first phase of this initiative
5 involved automating previously manual
6 processes, resulting in savings of over \$14
7 million. A second phase, which is still
8 being implemented, is expected to bring in as
9 much as \$39 million in additional savings.

10 I am extremely optimistic about the
11 future of this great university, especially
12 considering the challenges we have overcome
13 and the lessons that we have learned since
14 the pandemic. Thanks to you and Governor
15 Hochul for your continued support of CUNY.
16 Your investment directly results in a
17 stronger, more vibrant New York, one that is
18 inclusive and benefits all New Yorkers
19 regardless of race, socioeconomic and
20 immigrant status.

21 In our complete written testimony,
22 which we have submitted for the record, we
23 comment on the Executive Budget and share
24 additional highlights of our accomplishments,

1 impact and scale. And I'd be happy to answer
2 any questions you might have.

3 Thank you.

4 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you both.

5 Before we go to questions, I just
6 wanted to acknowledge that we've had a number
7 of Assemblymembers join us: Assemblywoman
8 Lupardo, Assemblywoman Clark, Assemblywoman
9 McMahan, and Assemblyman Eachus.

10 And we go for questions to our
11 Higher Ed chair, Assemblywoman Fahy,
12 10 minutes on the clock.

13 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Thank you. Thank
14 you, Madam Chair.

15 And thank you to both chancellors.
16 Welcome back, Chancellor King. Welcome back
17 to New York. And Chancellor Matos Rodríguez,
18 thank you again for being here.

19 Yes, I am the new chair, so bear with
20 me. And I know there are many, many
21 questions, but I'm going to start with
22 Chancellor King and then a few of these cross
23 over, so feel free to chime in.

24 Tuition. We might as well just get it

1 right out there, it's probably the elephant
2 in the room. It's probably been -- the
3 Governor has proposed a tuition increase.
4 Obviously it's tough timing. Both of you
5 mentioned enrollment challenges, and I'd like
6 to hear a little bit more on that. But if
7 you would address why the support for tuition
8 increases, particularly among the four
9 university centers. You had mentioned
10 privately how that may help with research
11 dollars, and I think it would help all of us
12 to understand, given the -- what is -- well,
13 it's never good timing, but what could be
14 certainly considered difficult timing with
15 any talk of a tuition increase.

16 Thank you.

17 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Thank you,
18 Chair. It's been a pleasure to have many
19 conversations about higher education policy
20 since you've taken on the role.

21 Look, fundamentally, SUNY is deeply
22 committed to affordability. And we stand out
23 in how affordable SUNY is by comparison to
24 other public higher ed systems. That said,

1 campuses need a reliable, predictable set of
2 expectations around revenue. The Governor
3 has proposed a modest tuition increase across
4 the system to try to provide that reliable
5 revenue source.

6 That said, 53 percent of our students
7 at our campuses today don't pay tuition
8 because of the generosity of Pell, TAP and
9 the Excelsior program. And that will
10 continue to be true even with the tuition
11 increase.

12 So that's one component, the
13 reliability, predictability so that campuses
14 can plan. We've held tuition steady since
15 2019, since the early emergence of the
16 pandemic. It's critical that campuses have
17 the ability to have that reliability.

18 The second piece is the differential
19 tuition for the University Centers. Their
20 cost structure is different. To be able to
21 fund research faculty, to be able to fund the
22 graduate students who conduct research with
23 those faculty, to fund the operation of labs
24 that bring well over a billion dollars in

1 federal research money to the state, they
2 need more resources. And if you look at
3 other states, they have a different tuition
4 structure for their research institutions
5 than for their other campuses.

6 And so that differential tuition piece
7 is, I think, a really important policy step
8 to make sure that our University Centers can
9 be competitive with a UNC Chapel Hill, with a
10 UC Berkeley, with the other research
11 institutions around the country.

12 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Thank you. And
13 this can go to both of you, but Chancellor
14 Matos, if you'd like to address it. I love
15 that you -- I've never had a conversation
16 that you don't mention how proud you are of
17 the Economic Mobility Index and that you're
18 one of the -- that you have 10 colleges with
19 the nation's best. As somebody who's
20 first-generation college and first-generation
21 high school, that resonates a lot to me. I
22 wouldn't be here without the access to higher
23 education. So very much appreciate that.

24 I understand, in addition to the

1 tuition proposal, there is a serious need for
2 funding. I know SUNY has a specific list of
3 distressed campuses, and I know CUNY has more
4 than its share of distressed campuses. Can
5 you talk about what is being done currently
6 as well as with any proposed funds in the
7 Governor's budget, and what may be -- what is
8 in the process to attract additional students
9 to really try to address the enrollments.

10 And again, both of you can, but if you
11 would, our CUNY chancellor.

12 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: So
13 thank you for that.

14 Yes, the 40 million we received in
15 strategic funds last year from the executive
16 and then the approved budget is money that we
17 have used particularly to address enrollment
18 challenges, right? We have the CUNY
19 Reconnect, which I mentioned in my testimony,
20 has yielded a great not just number of
21 students coming back, but also a lot of
22 learning from us on how to keep bringing
23 those students back. So we hope to continue
24 to capitalize on that with additional funding

1 and support.

2 Our CUNY Online initiative is a way to
3 capture a market that we have really not
4 addressed in CUNY. So it's another way to
5 bring in additional students to us in a
6 modality that brings flexibility to
7 particularly sort of working adults and --
8 which is important to us.

9 We've also began a transfer
10 initiative, which is part of that. Transfer
11 is a way to keep students enrolled and keep
12 them progressing, saving some other TAP
13 dollars and their financial aid. So we used
14 a number of those investments directly to
15 work on our enrollment, and we're beginning
16 to see in the spring a flattening of the
17 enrollment, so we're optimistic about what we
18 can do in the fall.

19 I'd like just to mention briefly, to
20 your question about the tuition increase,
21 CUNY has historically supported the Rational
22 Tuition Policy as one more tool in the
23 arsenal to bring revenues to our campuses.
24 We're very proud that even in years where

1 we've had the authority in the past, we have
2 not always exercised that. There's been
3 eight years of no tuition increases in the
4 community colleges. Right? So we believe
5 that we have shown that we are good stewards
6 when we're given that authority by the state
7 to do that.

8 And in the case of the proposed
9 tuition this year, similar numbers to what
10 Chancellor King mentioned about the number of
11 students who, between TAP and Pell, pay no
12 tuition. If you think about our community
13 colleges, right, the tuition would still be
14 under TAP. So probably around 80 percent of
15 the students will not see a tuition increase
16 in the community colleges, which is the
17 sector that we're most concerned about
18 because of enrollment.

19 So we believe that that tool, used
20 wisely, is a good way to invest, and we have
21 a good track record at CUNY of saying that
22 even though we have the authority, we only
23 use it when we think that the time is right.

24 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Great.

1 Chancellor King.

2 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Thank you. I
3 would echo the gratitude that Chancellor
4 Matos Rodríguez expressed for the enrollment
5 funding. That \$60 million has allowed our
6 campuses to expand high-demand programs in
7 areas like nursing, cybersecurity,
8 mechatronics.

9 I would also say we are doing a lot
10 systemwide to try to support our campuses
11 around addressing the enrollment challenge.
12 We saw a significant uptick in applications
13 this fall in part because of a two-week
14 fee-waiver period for applications and
15 aggressive marketing so that New Yorkers know
16 the great value proposition at SUNY.

17 We are also implementing something
18 called cascading admissions, where if a
19 student applies to, let's say, Stony Brook
20 and Buffalo but doesn't get in, we will
21 affirmatively reach out to them and say, You
22 didn't get in there, but there is a place for
23 you and a program that matches your interest
24 at a Fredonia or a Brockport. That really

1 allows us to make sure that students who may
2 only know of a few institutions that are more
3 famous, get the opportunity to go to a SUNY
4 campus.

5 We are also working with school
6 districts to make sure that every
7 twelfth-grader gets a personalized letter
8 saying there's a place for them at their
9 local community college, because we want
10 students to know, again, that there are great
11 opportunities for them at SUNY.

12 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: I have two other
13 questions, and I wanted just to add as well,
14 as the new chair, really look forward to
15 visiting many of your campuses. I'm well
16 behind the schedule that you mentioned,
17 Chancellor King, but look forward to at least
18 getting to a few.

19 Two questions -- and again, for both
20 of you, if you can split up the time. The
21 endowment. The Governor has proposed an
22 endowment for the four University Centers.
23 Chancellor Matos Rodríguez, you have also
24 expressed an interest in an endowment fund.

1 Can you talk about why that might be
2 important? Certainly I've heard from
3 colleagues and others that many campuses
4 would like this. And of course there is a
5 concern that it might affect other operating
6 dollars.

7 The second part is a completely
8 separate question, but if you can address it.
9 Community colleges, there's been a lot of
10 concern about the way the funding formula is
11 based now, the FTE. If you can both address
12 that -- if you support looking at a slightly
13 altered formula or if there's something we
14 should be considering there.

15 Thank you.

16 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: First on the
17 endowment. You know, the Governor has
18 proposed a \$500 million state investment that
19 would then attract a billion dollars in
20 private philanthropy. The revenue from that
21 \$1.5 billion would allow our University
22 Centers to go out competitively to recruit
23 faculty, to build out their research
24 capacity. The Governor has called for

1 doubling the state's level of federal
2 research dollars, which is achievable only if
3 the University Centers have the resources to
4 invest there.

5 So we think this is an important
6 opportunity really to build for the
7 long term. If you compare our institutions
8 to other state universities around the
9 country, one of the places where we're not as
10 competitive is in endowment resources.
11 University of Michigan, for example, has a
12 \$16 billion endowment.

13 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Can you give a
14 few seconds to your colleague? Thank you.

15 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: So
16 there will be a different structure for us,
17 right, because it wouldn't be -- we don't
18 have the same flashy centers as them.

19 But we think it's a great investment.
20 Those dollars remain being reinvested,
21 reinvested, no matter what is happening in
22 the economy in terms of the budget that we
23 might receive. And it's a way to encourage
24 more philanthropic support for our campuses,

1 which is something that's going to continue
2 to give. So I think that it's a good idea.

3 And on the FTEs, I think my
4 recommendation would be that until community
5 college enrollment stabilizes, to be tweaking
6 with the formula might not be the right time,
7 because nobody quite has a crystal ball to
8 know how things are going to pan out in the
9 future.

10 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Very helpful.

11 Thank you, Chair.

12 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

13 We go to the Senate.

14 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

15 Higher Ed Chair Toby Stavisky,

16 10 minutes.

17 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

18 Good to see you both.

19 Before I ask my questions, I just want
20 to mention the fact that I'm delighted that
21 the Governor's budget includes the --
22 transformational, I think is the current word
23 we use, for the improvements and increases
24 for SUNY. And I truly wish that CUNY had

1 been included in that transformation.

2 But let me ask the tuition question a
3 little bit differently. Both institutions I
4 believe, certainly the community colleges,
5 are experiencing declining enrollment. How
6 will a tuition increase help reverse the
7 trend of declining enrollment and bring the
8 students back to SUNY and to CUNY?

9 And I ask that question of both of
10 you. But let me add, for CUNY, there have
11 been 100,000 students lost, declined, in
12 New York City Department of Education
13 records. And that really affects, I believe,
14 CUNY.

15 But Chancellor King, will you start?

16 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Sure. Look --

17 SENATOR STAVISKY: Mine is a very
18 specific question. Particularly, let me add,
19 during times of inflation.

20 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Yes. Yeah.
21 So, you know, even with the tuition increase
22 that the Governor has proposed, our SUNY
23 campuses will be dramatically more affordable
24 than campuses in neighboring states. We're

1 committed to affordability. As we both
2 mentioned earlier, a large percentage of our
3 students, 53 percent for SUNY, don't pay
4 tuition now because of Pell, TAP and
5 Excelsior. That will still be true.

6 We think the quality of services that
7 campuses can offer is really important to
8 being competitive and attracting students.
9 Whether or not we're able to offer robust
10 academic programs in areas that students are
11 particularly interested in, whether or not we
12 have adequate mental health services and
13 other student supports, matters for
14 attracting students.

15 So in the end, we think that a tuition
16 increase over time, a modest tuition
17 increase, will help us actually position the
18 campuses to better attract students.

19 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: Yup.
20 So I begin by bringing greetings on behalf of
21 the 9,938 students from CUNY who are in your
22 district.

23 You have 29, Assemblywoman Fahy, I
24 forgot that.

1 (Laughter.)

2 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: So
3 thank you for your support.

4 On the community college, I mean, as I
5 mentioned before, between 70 and 80 percent
6 of the community college students will not
7 see the tuition increase because they will be
8 taken care of by either TAP or Pell.

9 Chancellor King mentioned the
10 importance of services to be able to attract
11 students. I want to take it one more point.
12 We need services to keep students enrolled.
13 Right? If we had done a better job at
14 retaining students, five, 10 percent, some of
15 the enrollment challenges that we face would
16 not have been as severe. So the services
17 that -- the funding that this will attract
18 would allow us to be better at making sure
19 that students stay on track and get retained.
20 So it's not just attracting students, but be
21 able to retain the students that we have.
22 And we think that the investment -- and that
23 we will have ways to support the students
24 that might need the help with private

1 fundraising.

2 SENATOR STAVISKY: Chancellor King,
3 you mentioned the 19 SUNY distressed
4 campuses, but I didn't see any mention -- and
5 in response to the Assemblymember's question,
6 but I did not see any reference to the three
7 university hospitals that traditionally have
8 been underfunded and done such a wonderful
9 job during the pandemic.

10 What do you -- how can we help them to
11 get back on their feet?

12 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Thank you for
13 raising that. We very much need additional
14 support for the hospitals, for two reasons.
15 One, they play a crucial safety net role in
16 their communities. In the case of Downstate,
17 SUNY Downstate, 85 percent of their patients
18 are Medicare, Medicaid, and uninsured. So
19 they play a crucial role serving the
20 community.

21 But they also play a crucial role in
22 training the workforce that we need. SUNY
23 Downstate, for example, is one of the biggest
24 providers of a diverse healthcare

1 workforce -- not just in the state, but
2 around the country.

3 So we desperately need additional
4 resources. Last year the Legislature added
5 nearly \$70 million for debt relief for the
6 three hospitals. That was hugely helpful.
7 We've proposed a funding formula that would
8 go back to a tradition the state had years
9 back, of subsidizing the state hospitals to
10 help address the difference in fringe
11 benefits costs that the state hospitals
12 experience.

13 We also know that SUNY Downstate will
14 have a \$133 million operating deficit in the
15 coming year. And we would be very grateful
16 for assistance there, to make sure that these
17 institutions can continue to serve their
18 communities.

19 SENATOR STAVISKY: Chancellor Matos
20 Rodríguez, does CUNY itself have an
21 endowment? And if so, how much is it?

22 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: So
23 the endowments are had by the individual
24 foundations of the colleges. So -- and I

1 think that if you combine that, it comes
2 close to like a billion dollars. But again,
3 they're held by the City College Foundation,
4 the Brooklyn College Foundation, the Queens
5 College Foundation. So those are the ways
6 the endowments are built in in our structure.

7 And can I take advantage of this
8 second to -- we don't have a hospital, but a
9 plug for the CUNY Medical School, the most
10 diverse medical school in the country that is
11 not in HBCUs. We're requesting 7 million in
12 support. If we want diverse physicians,
13 primary care physicians, that's what our
14 school is providing. So I take the
15 opportunity to make that comment too.

16 SENATOR STAVISKY: Chancellor, one
17 more question. In terms of the individual
18 colleges' debt, some of them are running at
19 quite a debt, particularly -- well, I'm not
20 going to mention the individual institutions,
21 but there are -- I understand that Baruch is
22 debt-free and both the Labor College and the
23 Law School -- the Labor College and
24 Journalism School, sorry, are very minimal

1 debt.

2 How do you propose to reverse those
3 trends and help the institutions get relief
4 from their debt?

5 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: So a number of
6 ways. And thank you for that question,
7 Senator.

8 First, we're working with each of the
9 campuses -- and I think many of you saw that
10 this year we asked all the campuses to engage
11 in 2 percent of savings. We've added that to
12 between 5 and 7 percent, depending on the
13 fiscal health of each of the campuses, to
14 sort of bring back that structural deficit.
15 So taking our own measures to address that.

16 And we're working with each campus
17 individually, both in the revenue side --
18 helping them with enrollment, for example.
19 We've been helping some campuses that had
20 some of the larger enrollment losses with
21 advertisement support from the central
22 office, and marketing, so they can attract
23 more students. So we have some individual
24 support to all the campuses.

1 That's why in our budget request, too,
2 additional operating dollars in helping us to
3 address the higher cost of STEM students is
4 one of the requests that we have in our
5 budget request, 53 million, so that we can
6 put that into our operational dollars, but to
7 be able to support the higher number of STEM
8 students that we have.

9 SENATOR STAVISKY: For both
10 chancellors, may I ask the question I always
11 ask, and that is what is the ratio of
12 full-time faculty and part-time faculty.

13 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: For us it's
14 about 53 percent full-time, 47 percent
15 part-time. The part-time is more common in
16 the community colleges than in the
17 four-years.

18 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ:
19 Systemwide we are 40 percent full-time, 60
20 percent part-time.

21 SENATOR STAVISKY: Last year we
22 provided record increases in higher
23 education, particularly to the public
24 colleges and universities, and there was

1 funding in there to hire additional faculty,
2 hopefully to choose the adjuncts for those
3 positions, assuming that they're qualified.

4 Real quick, what are you doing -- what
5 are the numbers there? Are you taking the
6 adjuncts? And how many positions are
7 unfilled? That's really the question I'm
8 asking.

9 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: We are very
10 grateful for the \$53 million for additional
11 faculty. And we expect that will translate
12 into between 325 and 375 new positions.

13 Those plans from campuses have been
14 approved, and they are going through search
15 processes as we speak. And I'd be glad to
16 keep you updated on the outcomes of those
17 searches.

18 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: So
19 we started hiring earlier, so we hired
20 250 faculty members of the 600 faculty that
21 we'll be able to hire from that also very
22 generous funding. Eighty percent of the
23 250 hires so far are adjuncts, so we're very
24 proud of that conversion rate. And the

1 distribution of faculty to the campuses was
2 made looking at faculty full-time to
3 part-time ratios.

4 So to your question, Senator, one of
5 the things that we addressed when we gave out
6 the lines was to help the schools that had
7 the worst ratios.

8 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

9 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

10 Assembly.

11 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We've been
12 joined by Assemblyman Burgos, Assemblywoman
13 Hyndman.

14 And we go to the ranker on Higher
15 Education for five minutes, Assemblyman
16 Smullen.

17 ASSEMBLYMAN SMULLEN: Thank you,
18 Chair, I appreciate it.

19 Chancellor King, in your opening
20 remarks you mentioned diversity, equity and
21 inclusion. And I know that you've been
22 Secretary of Education in the Obama
23 administration as well as, you know, in the
24 State Education Department.

1 How does that -- you know, as one of
2 your first acts is you're going to mandate a
3 class for all SUNY students to graduate to
4 be -- to include diversity, equity and
5 inclusion. What does that mean to you?

6 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: So about --
7 thank you for the question. About 15 months
8 ago or so the Board of Trustees completed a
9 process of reviewing the SUNY general
10 education requirements. And as part of those
11 general education requirements, there is a
12 requirement that students have a course
13 experience that addresses issues of
14 diversity, equity and inclusion. So, for
15 example, a course in U.S. history or
16 sociology or public health or communications.

17 And so each of the campuses will
18 identify which courses satisfy that
19 requirement. There's no additional course
20 credit for students, no additional cost for
21 students. This is just evolution of the
22 long-standing general education requirements.

23 ASSEMBLYMAN SMULLEN: So this is going
24 to be a migration of existing curriculum to

1 ensure that it hits certain touchstones
2 having to do with civics, ethics, public
3 good, educational needs and roles?

4 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Exactly. Well
5 said.

6 ASSEMBLYMAN SMULLEN: Okay. Because
7 I -- you know, one of the concerns about the
8 whole DEI thing is that it's inserting, you
9 know, various theories into public education
10 that everyone doesn't agree with. And
11 including things like critical race theory
12 and a variety of things.

13 And the hope would be -- and I did
14 question, at the Board of Regents
15 interviews -- the Board of Regents says, you
16 know, this is a SUNY thing, so they're --
17 they've said, Well, we don't have anything to
18 do with DEI curriculum approval.

19 Who in the SUNY administration,
20 then -- is it you that's responsible for the
21 oversight and approval of such curriculum?

22 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: As always with
23 courses at SUNY, the faculty at each of the
24 campuses are responsible for the curriculum

1 on their campuses.

2 Look, I would say it's important, we
3 believe it's important for students who will
4 enter a diverse society and a diverse
5 workforce to be prepared. We think it's
6 important that students in a U.S. history
7 class, for example, would learn about the
8 existence of the institution of slavery or
9 the history of the civil rights movement.
10 And that's the kind of requirement that we're
11 envisioning that our faculties will embrace,
12 as they long have. Thought it important for
13 students --

14 (Overtalk.)

15 ASSEMBLYMAN SMULLEN: Well, I
16 certainly think they have. If you ask a SUNY
17 professor, I don't think that they would
18 describe themselves as inherently racist.

19 But what I'm concerned with is where
20 this gets approved. So you're saying that
21 the presidents of each of the institutions
22 would be the ones responsible for the
23 implementation and the oversight of this DEI
24 initiative.

1 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Again, it's the
2 faculty at each of the institutions.

3 ASSEMBLYMAN SMULLEN: But the
4 president would oversee the faculty's
5 sequencing of it and the knowledge modules
6 within each course and how it would --

7 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Yeah, in the
8 shared governance model the campus leadership
9 team would work to support the faculty as
10 they assess their existing courses, if there
11 are any adaptations that need to be made, to
12 make sure that they are incorporating issues
13 of diversity.

14 ASSEMBLYMAN SMULLEN: Thank you for
15 that.

16 I just need to very quickly follow up
17 on the community colleges. Very important in
18 the large rural areas that I represent, and
19 many areas of upstate New York. One of the
20 things that they tell me is that their
21 funding goes up and down based on a
22 countercyclical economic model. When times
23 are good, people aren't in community colleges
24 because they're working. And sometimes when

1 times get bad, then they go to community
2 colleges to retool or retrain.

3 And one of the things that I thought
4 would be helpful, and has the SUNY system
5 looked at, is a 10-year model of enrollment
6 and funding. It's something I learned in the
7 Marine Corps, where you look at it from a
8 broad, long-term perspective. And instead of
9 having up and down funding based on the year
10 before or what's next year, you look at it
11 over a period of years.

12 Have you looked at that, or are you
13 having your SUNY, you know, analysis team
14 look at these community colleges? Because
15 I'm here to tell you, they're really
16 struggling.

17 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Look, I
18 appreciate the question. You know, community
19 colleges play a vital role in workforce
20 development as well as an access point for
21 students to higher education.

22 We have a system workgroup that's been
23 looking for some time at the community
24 college funding formula. That work paused

1 during COVID, but will restart.

2 You know, the challenge is that the
3 COVID period, the most intense period of the
4 pandemic, exacerbated enrollment losses that
5 we've seen nationwide for community colleges.
6 But what's hopeful, and this was helped in
7 large part by the \$60 million, is that
8 there's tremendous demand for programs like
9 nursing, cybersecurity, mechatronics. So
10 we're seeing that demand, we just need to
11 move our campuses to address that demand.

12 ASSEMBLYMAN SMULLEN: Thank you very
13 much, Chancellor.

14 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

15 We go to the Senate.

16 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you very
17 much.

18 Joe Griffo, ranker for Higher Ed, five
19 minutes.

20 SENATOR GRIFFO: Thank you. Thank
21 you, Chancellor Rodríguez, thanks, Chancellor
22 King, for being here today.

23 We talk about the declining enrollment
24 obviously within the systems and some of the

1 struggles and challenges you're facing, the
2 competitive choices that exist at this point
3 in time. Is either system considering or
4 contemplating closures or consolidations of
5 any of the campuses?

6 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: We are not,
7 because we think SUNY has a deep commitment
8 to the 64 communities where our campuses are
9 located. We think that each of our campuses,
10 with the right support, can adapt their
11 programs to meet the regional economic
12 development needs.

13 You know, there are 2 million
14 New Yorkers who have some credits and no
15 degree. We've got to make sure we get those
16 students back. There are young people, 18 to
17 24, who didn't go straight to college but
18 haven't yet figured out their plan. We've
19 got to make sure those students know there's
20 a place for them at SUNY.

21 So we feel, with the right level of
22 resources, we can make sure that all of our
23 campuses are able to thrive.

24 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: And

1 our campuses are anchor institutions in the
2 boroughs where they're located, so we are not
3 contemplating any such movement.

4 Also, greetings from the 18 CUNY
5 students who are in your district, Senator.

6 And -- but one of things we're
7 doing -- it goes back to the question about
8 community colleges -- is that we've, with the
9 funding we received from the state last year,
10 began to redesign some of the applied
11 associate's degrees, which are the two-year
12 degrees, which are not transfer-based, some
13 of those programs were set up for things that
14 were in demand 30, 35 years ago, maybe not so
15 much now.

16 So we began to re-look at some of
17 them, update them, get rid of the ones that
18 are not really current, and also begin to
19 insert items like apprenticeships, which have
20 proven to be very, very valuable in some of
21 those programs, so that we can get students
22 getting working and learning as they go. So
23 it's another way to bring additional value to
24 what the community colleges do.

1 SENATOR GRIFFO: So that's a good
2 point to segue on. What can we do to address
3 some of the shortages that exist right now in
4 nursing, we talk about healthcare shortages;
5 in education, for teachers? What is the plan
6 right now, knowing that those shortages exist
7 and that you have a key role in trying to
8 develop the workforce to meet the need?

9 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Yeah. So thank
10 you for that.

11 And we desperately need more nurses as
12 a state. We have shortages really across the
13 healthcare workforce. There's a proposal for
14 increased funding for the high-needs nursing
15 program. That would be very helpful to us,
16 because one of the challenges is recruiting
17 nursing faculty. And so having additional
18 resources to pay people to be able to attract
19 nurses to teach in our programs is critical.

20 There's also a bill that Assemblywoman
21 Lupardo and Senator Stavisky have that would
22 allow 30 percent of the clinical hours for
23 nursing to be done through simulation. We
24 think this is extraordinarily important,

1 because the lack of clinical placements, the
2 difficulty of clinical hours, is a real
3 obstacle to training the nurses we need.
4 That bill setting 30 percent as a simulation
5 maximum would be very, very helpful.

6 We also think that investments that
7 the Governor talked about, the 75 million in
8 transformation initiatives, will help us
9 develop programs that match some of the
10 emerging needs that we're seeing -- in
11 renewable energy, for example.

12 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: And,
13 I mean, similar challenges on our end in
14 terms of the clinical placement for the
15 nurses to be able to complete their education
16 and being able to have more flexibility in
17 the things now that -- we've learned a number
18 of things because of the pandemic in terms of
19 how we can use virtual or remote training for
20 them.

21 Another additional flexibility in --
22 we have both not that many students going
23 into nursing, but sometimes we have more
24 students going into nursing that complete the

1 programs. And we should be able to steer
2 them into other allied health-related fields
3 where we also have shortages. So funding for
4 that would be helpful too. And -- but I echo
5 the comments from Chancellor King.

6 SENATOR GRIFFO: And last, again on
7 tuition, are you concerned that these tuition
8 increases that are proposed could potentially
9 fall predominantly on the middle-class
10 families? Because you have the Excelsior
11 award, you have other means for others. Is
12 there a concern there that that not only
13 would it fall on them but also make SUNY and
14 CUNY more noncompetitive?

15 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Well, look,
16 we're very committed to affordability. I'd
17 say if you compare SUNY's tuition to peer
18 institutions, we're about \$3,000 or so lower
19 than that tuition.

20 The increase the Governor has proposed
21 would translate into a couple of hundred
22 dollars a year on campuses. I realize that's
23 challenging, any increase is challenging.
24 But we've got to have a way to pay for things

1 like mental health services, student
2 supports.

3 SENATOR GRIFFO: Thank you.

4 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.
5 Assembly.

6 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We now go to
7 Assemblywoman Bichotte Hermelyn, three
8 minutes, question and answer.

9 ASSEMBLYWOMAN BICHOTTE HERMELYN:
10 Thank you.

11 Thank you, Chancellor King and
12 Chancellor Rodríguez, for being here today
13 and for all your hard work. I represent the
14 42nd Assembly District in Brooklyn, the home
15 of CUNY's Harvard, Brooklyn College, and I am
16 also a proud alum of Buffalo State College
17 University and University of Buffalo.

18 I have three questions. One, the
19 first one is pertaining to the SEEK and the
20 EOP programs. Both were instituted by
21 legends, Black legends -- we're in Black
22 History Month right now -- Shirley Chisholm
23 and Arthur Eve. And these programs are being
24 reduced, being proposed to be reduced by

1 1.3 million and by 1.1 million. These are
2 programs that historically have helped
3 students of color and those who are seeking
4 financial help.

5 The second question is we know that
6 CUNY had money for mental health counselors,
7 and they were hired on a part-time temporary
8 basis. Now, at this juncture, what is the
9 plan to hire these counselors as full-time,
10 permanent workers?

11 And lastly, childcare centers. I'm a
12 new mom. I'm excited to hear that this is
13 being implemented; want a little bit to know
14 how many children would be serviced.

15 Thank you.

16 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: So
17 let me -- and again, on behalf of the 3,569
18 CUNY students in your district, I bring you
19 greetings and thank you for your support.

20 A number of things. The mental health
21 services, that's where we need the operating
22 dollars to be able to convert. In our case,
23 we put -- in each campus we used 2 million of
24 the stimulus money to be able to support

1 mental health. So we have to get additional
2 operational dollars so we can then, the
3 personnel that was hired, be able to keep
4 them to be providing those very important
5 services.

6 I can get you a breakdown of the
7 childcare by campus, because I don't have
8 those figures off the top of my head. But
9 clearly the Governor's money was very, very
10 helpful in increasing capacity in some of our
11 centers and adding one new center at
12 Queensborough Community College.

13 And on SEEK, again, a very important
14 program. We want that money restored.
15 Enrollment was hurt in those programs during
16 the pandemic because the students coming to
17 the SEEK program tend to come from some of
18 the areas that were hardest hit by the
19 pandemic.

20 One item that we want to suggest is
21 also the number of SEEK students that are
22 STEM majors is low. We want to continue to
23 diversify our STEM fields, which would also
24 maybe target some of the SEEK investment into

1 supporting additional STEM majors in SEEK,
2 and we have a proposal for that.

3 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Quickly, we are
4 very supportive of a restoration of funding
5 for EOP, believe deeply in the program.

6 And on childcare centers, we are at 47
7 currently across 43 campuses, and we have
8 seven more that are in the process of
9 operating, which will bring us to 54
10 childcare centers on 49 campuses.

11 One of the challenges is having the
12 level of resources to make the childcare
13 services more broadly available. We have
14 lots of waitlists.

15 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you,
16 Chancellor.

17 We go to the Senate.

18 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

19 And we go to Senator Gounardes.

20 SENATOR GOUNARDES: (Mic off;
21 inaudible.) There, that's on.

22 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Some of them work
23 better than others.

24 SENATOR GOUNARDES: In case you didn't

1 hear me, good morning, gentlemen, good
2 afternoon, gentlemen.

3 At the outset, just to hit the tuition
4 increase drum again, a tuition increase is a
5 tax increase by another name. And it doesn't
6 matter if we're holding harmless a percentage
7 of kids who are going to have to pay it, it's
8 a tax increase by another name. And a lot of
9 people are concerned about asking students in
10 this state to pay more for what should be, in
11 an ideal world, a free, quality, public
12 higher education.

13 I want to turn to Chancellor Rodríguez
14 first. You know, as Senator Stavisky
15 highlighted, I think the budget that's
16 proposed for SUNY is fantastic. I wish that
17 you had gotten the same budget. I think it's
18 offensive that in a state where we have two
19 phenomenal public institutions, we have seen
20 such disparities in funding proposals. And
21 we have done a really great job over the
22 years to not pit SUNY and CUNY against each
23 other. But by my measure of the Governor's
24 budget this year, you're only getting

1 35 percent of what's being proposed for
2 higher ed, which is deeply concerning.

3 Now, the Governor is proposing
4 \$94 million. You asked for 313 million.
5 Some of us want to see that significantly
6 higher. You're putting out memos about
7 cutting budgets and impacts in schools. If
8 you only got the 94 million, what's that
9 going to do for hiring more teachers, what's
10 that going to do for class sizes, what's that
11 going to do for campus maintenance, what's
12 that going to do on the product that you're
13 delivering for a quarter-million students in
14 New York City?

15 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: So
16 thank you for the question. So we are
17 hopeful that the budget process will, through
18 the conversations, highlight how CUNY can
19 benefit from similar investments. The
20 arguments about the IT needs is something
21 that I mentioned in my testimony. We're
22 already making some of the investments in
23 that modernization. We can use the capital
24 dollars for that.

1 Clearly our research labs, our science
2 labs can also use an upgrade in terms of
3 additional capital dollars, as is laid out in
4 the budget. We have shown great ways in
5 which we used the 40 million strategic
6 funding last year. So a similar funding
7 version this year is something that can
8 continue to allow us to invest in enrollment
9 techniques and retention techniques to
10 support our students. So we can clearly make
11 a case for that.

12 We touched on the endowment also. So
13 in all those areas we can make a similar case
14 for how that investment will be dramatically
15 important to CUNY and to the 6,028 CUNY
16 students in your district.

17 SENATOR GOUNARDES: I dropped a
18 little bit. I used to be number one at
19 10,000 plus.

20 But if I'm hearing you, 94 million's
21 not enough, is I think the takeaway there,
22 something that I think we should all be
23 mindful of.

24 Chancellor King, I want to talk about

1 Downstate as well. I'm concerned about the
2 debt service payments not being picked up by
3 the state. Downstate's in critical need of
4 infrastructure upgrades. How is that going
5 to impact your ability to deliver a
6 world-class hospital?

7 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Don't answer now,
8 because you're out of time. We warned
9 everyone this would happen.

10 So please, when you have questions you
11 couldn't get back to us on now, you're going
12 to put them in writing. If you send them to
13 Helene and myself, we'll make sure all
14 members of the committees get your answers.

15 Thank you.

16 Assembly.

17 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We go -- well,
18 first of all, we've been joined by
19 Assemblywoman Wallace; I wanted to
20 acknowledge her being here earlier.

21 And we go to Assemblywoman Simon,
22 three minutes.

23 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Thank you.

24 Thank you to Chancellor King and

1 Chancellor Matos Rodríguez.

2 There are a number of things cleverly
3 disguised in the Governor's budget as
4 maintaining or -- that are really cuts. A
5 lot of the Opportunity Programs, for example,
6 have either been cut or are dramatically
7 scaled back.

8 As well as, as I understand it, this
9 issue about the endowment programs, which I
10 think CUNY has argued persuasively would be
11 very important to it as well.

12 Can you comment on those things that
13 are actually cuts? I know you've made your
14 testimony very positive-sounding, but it
15 would be nice to know what is lacking.

16 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ:
17 Well, so, but, you know, we are positive
18 guys, so that is -- shouldn't be surprising.
19 We're in this line of work because we believe
20 in the power of higher ed.

21 Clearly, in terms of the restoration,
22 you talked about additional funding for the
23 programs that support students with
24 disabilities, something that I don't have to

1 even look to know that the chancellor is
2 equally supportive as I am in terms of the
3 return on investment for those programs. And
4 also how important they are, particularly
5 coming after the pandemic, to be able to
6 support that growing student population in
7 our campuses.

8 We're big fans of the Opportunity
9 Programs, so we feel that they should be
10 restored also.

11 As I mentioned in the case of SEEK, I
12 hope that we can also tweak them a little bit
13 and support STEM in that area. So again --
14 and that I mentioned in some of the comments
15 to Senator Gounardes in terms of making a
16 case for some of the investments that could
17 be done in CUNY with capital dollars, is that
18 they need funds too.

19 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: I would echo
20 those points around the restoration of the
21 Opportunity Programs, as well as additional
22 funding for supporting students with
23 disabilities.

24 I would emphasize -- and this

1 addresses the question, I think, that was
2 asked earlier about the role of the
3 hospitals. And they really were left out,
4 and that happens I think often because
5 they're seen as a higher ed issue, but
6 they're both a health and a higher ed issue.

7 We need resources if we're going to
8 serve patients and if we're going to continue
9 to produce a diverse workforce. And that's
10 the debt service for three hospitals, which
11 is 70 million; it's the 133 million to
12 address the gap for SUNY Downstate. And it's
13 a long-term solution to the big gap in fringe
14 benefits costs for our hospitals compared to
15 their peer hospitals.

16 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: I would also
17 like to just compliment you on getting rid of
18 Blackboard --

19 (Laughter.)

20 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: -- and suggest
21 that the SUNY system might do that as well.

22 And also, please look at A4659, which
23 is a bill that would address this issue about
24 the way we teach our teachers how to teach

1 reading, which I know is an issue I've
2 discussed with both of you.

3 Thank you.

4 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ:

5 Thank you.

6 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Senate?

7 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

8 Senator John Liu.

9 SENATOR LIU: Thank you, Madam
10 Chairperson.

11 First let me welcome Chancellor King,
12 as you have -- as has been done to you many
13 times already this morning. Your predecessor
14 never seemed to be interested in figuring out
15 what correlation, if any, existed between
16 enrollment and increasing tuitions. Tuitions
17 have continued to rise over the last decade.
18 Enrollments have continued to decline over
19 the past decade. One could say there's
20 probably a link.

21 Is there any effort on the part of
22 your office to finally take a look at this?

23 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: You know, look.

24 The downward enrollment trends are true

1 nationally. We've held tuition at SUNY
2 campuses constant since 2019. I will say
3 that the Trustees made an ask for
4 \$120 million in operating support. The
5 Governor's tuition proposal gets to about
6 97 million of that. We still think the
7 resources for services and student
8 supports are essential, and we want to make
9 sure we get there.

10 SENATOR LIU: All right. I mean, the
11 Governor might also be saying that -- might
12 not necessarily be saying that you need to
13 get the remainder from tuition increases.
14 She might be saying there might be things you
15 could do more efficiently so that you can
16 make do with the 97 million that she's
17 provided.

18 A question for both of you, though,
19 because you're such positive guys.

20 (Laughter.)

21 SENATOR LIU: You know, for the
22 longest time we've maintained this
23 60 percent/40 percent parity between SUNY and
24 CUNY, and the executive proposal completely

1 throws that out the window. Are you still
2 both really positive about that? Because you
3 don't address that in either of your
4 testimony. And for many of us, it's a huge
5 problem. It's something that we've respected
6 for a long time and that acknowledges the
7 usage of CUNY and SUNY respectively.

8 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Before you
9 answer, Senator Liu, I'm sorry, you were only
10 supposed to get three minutes, not 10.

11 SENATOR LIU: Oh, Madam Chair, I
12 thought I was getting -- give me seven, I'll
13 be happy with seven.

14 (Laughter.)

15 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: No, I'm sorry.
16 This had already been decided, so --

17 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Just put two
18 minutes on the clock.

19 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: So we'll give you
20 an extra plus. You'll get two more minutes
21 for the answering of questions.

22 Thank you. Not 12, okay.

23 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: So
24 first, thank you on behalf of the 7,928 CUNY

1 students in your district --

2 SENATOR LIU: Can I get a list of --
3 can I get that list?

4 (Laughter.)

5 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: Yes,
6 easily, we can get that.

7 You know, that has been the
8 traditional allocation for higher education.
9 As I mentioned before, in my testimony we
10 made the case as to why we think that similar
11 investments in capital in IT, similar
12 investments in capital in the sciences,
13 similar investments in the endowment of our
14 campuses, and similar investments in
15 strategic funds is things that CUNY will use
16 well and needs.

17 And so that would be my response to
18 the 60/40 question.

19 SENATOR LIU: So you're happy with
20 what the Executive Budget proposes now, other
21 than the ask for more?

22 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: I
23 mentioned that we could use the additional
24 funding. And I outlined some of the things

1 which we could use it for.

2 SENATOR LIU: Okay.

3 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: I'd just add,
4 my mom went to Hunter. She was the first
5 person in her family to graduate from
6 college. I'm a huge CUNY fan.

7 My role is to advocate for resources
8 for SUNY, but I'm proud to sit with my CUNY
9 partner in advocating for resources for
10 public higher education generally.

11 SENATOR LIU: The Governor proposed
12 almost a billion dollars more for SUNY
13 without a comparable increase to CUNY. I
14 mean, how do you reconcile that? And how
15 does that -- I mean, do we just abandon the
16 60/40 split? Is that obsolete now?

17 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Well, one thing
18 I would say about the Governor's proposal
19 around the endowment in particular, and the
20 \$500 million that would drive \$1.5 billion to
21 University Centers, that's really about an
22 investment in research in the state.

23 You know, we have over a billion
24 dollars in federal dollars that are coming to

1 us to support research. The Governor's
2 articulated a goal of doubling that. The
3 investment in the University Centers is a way
4 to get there, to get that return on
5 investment.

6 SENATOR LIU: All right. Since I had
7 seven minutes taken away, Chancellor Matos
8 Rodríguez, I just want to remind you that you
9 had tasked Hector with completing the
10 agreement for the School of Labor and Urban
11 Studies. He's done half of it. Can we get
12 the other half done, the welcome center?

13 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: So
14 we are giving great additional space to the
15 School of Labor, and we'll be happy to
16 continue to support that work.

17 SENATOR LIU: We want to cut the
18 ribbon on that welcome center.

19 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you, John.

20 SENATOR LIU: Thank you.

21 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.
22 Assembly.

23 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We go to
24 Assemblywoman Clark.

1 ASSEMBLYWOMAN CLARK: Thank you so
2 very much.

3 And adding my voice to many of my
4 colleagues here; as a proud SUNY graduate, I
5 am excited to have you here.

6 So my first question is the 20 percent
7 withholding on the community colleges. We
8 understand obviously there are some issues
9 with the formula. We know some of the
10 admissions issues that they're having and the
11 stress that this really adds to what is --
12 you know, I get trying to figure out what
13 we're going to do about enrollment. You
14 know, the funding floor itself is so key
15 right now. As we know, the cyclical nature
16 of community college enrollment -- and we
17 know some of the formula needs to maybe
18 potentially be looked at as well, so why the
19 need to do that right now? Why put that
20 added burden on our community colleges?

21 We've seen these programs with this
22 withholding over the last few years of COVID
23 dollars, of other things, with this
24 20 percent. And it's never gone well, it's

1 never paid well, it's never a process that
2 works for anyone in a timely way. So just
3 wondering what the point is.

4 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Look, let me
5 first say we are very grateful for the
6 community college funding floor, which I
7 think is very important for our campuses.

8 If the 20 percent hold-back is in the
9 final enacted budget, we would work with our
10 community colleges to efficiently develop
11 plans at each of the community colleges for
12 how they might grow the programs where
13 there's high demand and increase efficiency
14 and regional coordination. That's our
15 understanding of what the Governor intended,
16 and we're prepared to work with our campuses
17 to execute on that.

18 ASSEMBLYWOMAN CLARK: Excellent.

19 Second question, great to see
20 53 percent of our students not paying tuition
21 at SUNY. But one of the things on TAP -- and
22 we've closed the TAP gap, and we know that
23 will be meaningful. I'm not a fan of the
24 tuition hike, but given -- whether that

1 happens or not, the TAP gap will help those
2 53 percent. But what we haven't seen is a
3 change in family incomes eligible for TAP,
4 nor the increase in the minimum amount
5 awarded, in decades.

6 And so as much as we've made college
7 and continue to make SUNY affordable for a
8 lot of families, there's still a middle-class
9 and lower-middle-class family that is, as
10 much as their -- all these other costs are
11 going up, are not seeing any more help there.

12 Is that something that you guys have
13 looked at to understand how TAP could help
14 more families?

15 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: We'd love to
16 have a conversation about raising the income
17 threshold for TAP and Excelsior, and also
18 potentially covering fees within TAP and
19 Excelsior as well.

20 ASSEMBLYWOMAN CLARK: Excellent. And
21 then my last one, on the distressed campuses.
22 I just think this is really an issue if we're
23 not going to put more operating dollars in
24 it. I mean, this is decades in the making of

1 sort of funding not being there when needed
2 and this austerity that we saw over the
3 years. It's a cycle, then, because then they
4 cancel classes and then it hurts enrollment.
5 I just think that we're not doing enough to
6 really -- we can't pay for that on the backs
7 of tuition hikes. So I think we need to put
8 more dollars into our distressed campuses.

9 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

10 To the Senate.

11 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Senator Murray.

12 SENATOR MURRAY: Thank you very much.

13 Thank you, Madam Chair.

14 Thank you both for being here. Good
15 to see you again.

16 On Friday I was with President McInnis
17 of Stony Brook University. We had a little
18 get-together, and I asked about the
19 perception of the brain drain, giving a great
20 quality education to all of these students
21 and then having them leave.

22 She gave me a number that was good to
23 hear, and impressive. She said about
24 80 percent of the students from Stony Brook

1 University that graduate stay.

2 Do you have similar numbers across the
3 SUNY and CUNY systems?

4 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: I'm -- I'm -- I
5 can get you the specifics.

6 I will say we -- our analysis suggests
7 that somewhere between one in four and one in
8 three college graduates in New York State is
9 a SUNY alum.

10 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: And
11 we have data, the first five years, about 95,
12 90 percent of the CUNY students stay in
13 New York. Over 10 years, it's closer to 80.

14 SENATOR MURRAY: How, in that same
15 vein, is there data available as far as the
16 percentage of -- because it was brought up
17 that perhaps we have a higher percentage of
18 in-state students as opposed to out-of-state
19 students. Do you have numbers or figures
20 that you can provide us in regards to that as
21 well?

22 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Yeah, we can
23 provide you the specific campus-by-campus
24 numbers. I think generally we're at about

1 85 percent in-state.

2 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: And
3 we're probably higher. You know, given being
4 in the city.

5 And I forgot to bring greetings on
6 behalf of the 466 CUNY students in your
7 district.

8 SENATOR MURRAY: There we go.

9 Switching gears real quick, because we
10 were talking about community colleges and the
11 struggles we have with them right now.

12 But I do find it ironic in the budget
13 we're talking about the MTA payroll tax that
14 still hits community colleges at this time.
15 What's your feeling on the impact of -- at a
16 time when they're struggling so much, to now
17 increase the MTA payroll commuting tax on the
18 community colleges?

19 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Well, look, I
20 think from our perspective we're focused on
21 higher education as opposed to transportation
22 policy.

23 But we do worry about our students'
24 ability to get to campuses, and the larger

1 issue of having adequate investment in the
2 state in transportation so that students have
3 good, reliable public transportation options
4 to get to campus.

5 SENATOR MURRAY: But again, the
6 concern being other schools being exempt but
7 community colleges not. I have, again,
8 numbers from Suffolk Community College that
9 say that it's costing -- and again, I know in
10 the overall scheme, 400,000 doesn't seem like
11 a lot. But 400,000 right now they're paying
12 in the payroll tax, and then it's going to go
13 up to 600,000.

14 But, I mean, again, at a time when
15 they're struggling and looking for every
16 dollar, we're looking at tuition increases,
17 we're looking at enrollment being down -- is
18 this the right time?

19 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Again, I think
20 from our standpoint, the worry that we have
21 around transportation is really our students
22 who aren't able to get to class reliably
23 because as a state and country we haven't
24 invested enough in public transportation.

1 SENATOR MURRAY: Thank you very much.

2 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Assembly.

3 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We go to
4 Assemblywoman Lupardo.

5 ASSEMBLYWOMAN LUPARDO: Thank you very
6 much.

7 Hello. It's nice to see you both.

8 First of all, I wanted to note that I
9 am a SUNY grad myself and proud to represent
10 one of our centers, as well as one of the
11 best nursing schools in the state, at
12 Binghamton University.

13 I wanted to thank you both for your
14 guest viewpoint that you published recently
15 in the New York News. That was very helpful.

16 Also I wanted to make sure you're
17 aware that over 50 SUNY and CUNY deans,
18 program directors and department chairs have
19 requested that that nursing simulation
20 training bill go into the State Budget.

21 The question I have for you both is
22 the issue has come up about the need to
23 define quality-based simulation. Do you
24 think that's going to be something that we

1 can overcome soon?

2 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: I'm very

3 hopeful we can overcome that soon.

4 Look, we have a state and national

5 crisis around the supply of nurses. I think

6 it's incumbent on all of us -- higher

7 education, Governor, Legislature, State

8 Education Department, the healthcare

9 community, to come together around a solution

10 this session that gets us to a clear

11 threshold for the percentage of hours that

12 can be done through simulation.

13 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: And

14 I'll just echo that I would hope that in that

15 conversation we go to data-driven answers. I

16 think that in many of these things we have

17 still a misconception about quality in online

18 and quality in simulation. There's quality

19 and lack of quality there; there's quality

20 and lack of quality in in-person education

21 too, right?

22 So I just hope that as we go deeper

23 here that we use data and not maybe some

24 perceptions that we might have from the past

1 in terms of what the quality of that
2 education is.

3 ASSEMBLYWOMAN LUPARDO: Well,
4 hopefully we can expedite that perhaps in the
5 budget, but certainly by the end of session.

6 I just would like to echo the
7 questions that were asked by Ms. Clark, but
8 to mention on the community college front
9 we're certainly grateful about the floor, but
10 if you talk to most community colleges
11 they're looking for the floor plus four,
12 which many of us are certainly supporting.
13 Community colleges have to be, along with
14 BOCES, the absolute foundation to our
15 workforce development efforts.

16 I just wanted to also just mention how
17 appreciative we all are for the work that's
18 being done at both of your institutions.
19 It's really significant. We're very proud to
20 have you here and to represent the state.

21 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Thank you.

22 (Discussion off the record.)

23 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

24 Senator Webb.

1 Department of Budget collecting this, as
2 opposed to CUNY and SUNY? So that's one of
3 my questions.

4 My second question relates to
5 workforce development, as this is something
6 that's coming up, you know, with both SUNY
7 and CUNY being integral.

8 My other question is how is workforce
9 development tracked, like specifically. Not
10 just in terms of the number of jobs, but like
11 how is it broken down?

12 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: So first, thank
13 you for all your support for SUNY and for
14 your commitment to our effort to diversify
15 leadership across our campuses through the
16 Black Leadership Institute. Appreciate your
17 support there.

18 Look, on the community college
19 20 percent hold-back, our view is that we
20 would work very diligently with campuses to
21 develop a plan that would focus on growing
22 enrollment, leveraging investments like the
23 \$60 million from last year to grow programs
24 that we know are going to be high demand:

1 Nursing, cybersecurity, renewable energy, so
2 forth.

3 So we're very optimistic that if that
4 is included in the enacted budget, that we
5 could work with our campuses to quickly
6 develop solid plans for their long-term
7 future.

8 In terms of workforce development, we
9 look at both the placement outcomes for
10 workforce development, aligned degrees and
11 certificates, as well as the earnings impact.
12 And one of the things I think we need to work
13 on is making sure that students know what
14 great opportunities there are for them --
15 that when students complete a nursing
16 program, there are great jobs on the other
17 side. That when students compete a
18 cybersecurity program, they can get even
19 six-figure jobs afterwards.

20 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

21 Assembly.

22 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Assemblyman
23 Epstein next.

24 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Thank you both.

1 Do you both support medication
2 abortion available in all campuses across the
3 state, both SUNY and CUNY? The medication
4 abortion that the Governor proposed in the
5 budget, do you support that?

6 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: It's
7 something that we already have available in
8 many of our campuses, either by the campus
9 itself or --

10 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Chancellor, I
11 only have three minutes, so yes or no would
12 be great. Yes, do you --

13 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: Yes.

14 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Yes.

15 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Thank you.

16 Thank you.

17 Do you have enough standalone funding
18 to support students with disabilities
19 currently for those students?

20 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: We need more
21 resources.

22 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: We
23 fundraise for that, but additional dollars
24 are always welcome.

1 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Great.

2 So CUNY, we've seen a proposed -- a
3 hiring freeze and potential cuts. What
4 impact would those cuts, \$100 million in
5 cuts, have on student services? We've seen
6 on campuses they're not hiring to replace
7 filled spaces. What is that really going to
8 mean for our campuses across the system?

9 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ:

10 Well, like I said, we are taking measures to
11 do some cost savings, right? And we have a
12 budget proposal that talked about additional
13 operating dollar support so we can have the
14 services that our students need, and they
15 want, to thrive.

16 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: You know, I know
17 there's a hiring freeze, right, on -- at
18 CUNY? I've heard from presidents that
19 there's a hiring freeze.

20 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: They
21 have to submit a plan, yes.

22 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: And so that
23 means they cannot replace any positions, and
24 that will impact class size, I assume, and

1 class external services --

2 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ:

3 Clearly it will have an impact on services.

4 I mean, class size is actually down over the
5 last couple of years, so it will have an
6 impact on services.

7 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: And then so
8 we've seen students leaving both systems,
9 CUNY and SUNY, and I know we want to get them
10 all back. But I'm just wondering if we're
11 cutting services and raising tuition, how do
12 you both expect to be able to get those
13 students back if we're making it a really
14 more difficult place for them to thrive?

15 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Look, the key
16 is to provide the services and opportunities
17 that students want and need, both to enroll
18 new students and, as Chancellor Matos
19 Rodríguez raised earlier, to retain the
20 students that we have. Retention is an
21 enrollment strategy.

22 And so we're working hard to do that.
23 Investments like the 60 million last year and
24 the 53 million for faculty, hugely important.

1 We're glad those are included in this budget.
2 But there's no question, we need to continue
3 to invest in public higher ed if we're going
4 to attract students and ensure that we have
5 the workforce we need as a state.

6 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: A hundred
7 percent, we need more resources. Basically
8 we're saying if -- and I don't -- I
9 appreciate your concern for more tuition, I
10 just think that tuition increases is going to
11 make it more difficult for students, as I
12 hear all the time.

13 And unfortunately we don't have
14 students on our panels today to hear their
15 voices, but I would encourage us to be
16 thinking about alternatives. And if that's
17 resources, I think that's our responsibility
18 to us and the students in both systems
19 statewide.

20 So thank you both for your time.

21 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ:
22 Thank you. And greetings from the 1,543
23 students in your district from CUNY.

24 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Senate.

1 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

2 Senator Chu.

3 SENIOR CHU: Thank you, Madam Chair.

4 Chancellor Matos Rodríguez, I believe
5 I represent the most in the state, I believe,
6 over 10,000.

7 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ:

8 10,483, yes, you're absolutely --

9 (Laughter.)

10 SENIOR CHU: There we go. Thank you.

11 I did my homework.

12 (Laughter.)

13 SENIOR CHU: So as an international
14 student, where I came from, and also as an
15 immigrant myself, I got my degree in CUNY
16 Brooklyn College. I really appreciate that.
17 That really opened the door for me to be able
18 to be here today.

19 So I found myself, when I was in the
20 school learning, very fortunate to study in
21 such a diverse and multicultural environment,
22 and that's really important for students with
23 immigrant family backgrounds and beyond.

24 So CUNY, as policy, follows the

1 New York City DOE academic holiday calendar.
2 And there have been a number of resolutions
3 passed by the City Council and multiple
4 independent student and faculty university
5 bodies calling for the recognition of Lunar
6 New Year and Eid as a university-wide holiday
7 for CUNY.

8 So given the number of Asian and
9 Muslim students enrolled with CUNY, and with
10 the highest enrollment coming from my
11 district in particular, so is there any
12 process in place to implement these two
13 holidays and to reflect the recognition of
14 the culture and show how inclusive our public
15 higher education system can be?

16 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: So
17 thank you so much for your question. It
18 allows me to clarify our policy, which is
19 state law and CUNY policy, which is that any
20 student or staff member or faculty member who
21 wants to celebrate a holiday due to
22 religious -- that they are totally allowed to
23 do so, right? And in the case of a student,
24 they just have to sort of notify the faculty

1 member and let them know that they're going
2 to be able to do that. Right?

3 So there is a mechanism already by
4 which individuals of any religion can
5 practice their religion. And it's first in
6 state law, and it's also in CUNY, and we let
7 students and faculty know about this
8 practice.

9 We actually have our university
10 provost looking at whether a different
11 calendar can accommodate different kinds of
12 holidays. It's a complicated thing in terms
13 of the number of days that you have to have
14 instruction, so we're looking at that. But I
15 think the most important thing is to let
16 everybody know that right now that is the law
17 and CUNY policy and nobody should not be
18 celebrating a holiday because they think that
19 they're going to be penalized.

20 SENIOR CHU: Thank you.

21 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

22 Assembly.

23 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Assemblywoman
24 Forrest, is she -- oh, there she is.

1 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FORREST: Thank you so
2 much, Chancellor King and Chancellor Matos,
3 for being here.

4 My first question is to Chancellor
5 Matos. I saw that you had -- in your
6 testimony you highlighted a new request for
7 STEM programming. How much is it? And can
8 you give me a little -- let us understand a
9 little bit what you're proposing. Thank you.

10 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ:
11 Thank you for your question. And greetings
12 from 1,968 students from CUNY in your
13 district.

14 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FORREST: Including me
15 (laughing).

16 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: I
17 know, including you as an alum.

18 We wanted to recognize that the number
19 of students that we're getting in STEM is
20 increasing, and that's something that we're
21 all proud of. And I think we want to be
22 supportive as a state of the opportunities in
23 the workforce in STEM. Those students are
24 more expensive to educate than other

1 students, that's a reality. Faculty costs
2 more, the facilities cost more to do that.
3 That is not recognized in any of our funding
4 formulas.

5 So we requested \$53 million to sort of
6 make up for the gap of the cost of educating
7 STEM students. We think that that is an
8 investment in the right direction of the
9 kinds of fields that we want our students to
10 go. We want to remain competitive to be able
11 to hire the faculty that is more expensive.
12 A computer scientist, we're competing against
13 other tech industries out there.

14 So this would be, first, a way to
15 support our operational funding, and then
16 also recognize that those students cost more
17 and we want to continue to encourage them to
18 be part of our student body.

19 So thank you for your question.

20 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FORREST: Thank you,
21 Chancellor. I really hope that this line,
22 you know, makes it into our house -- because
23 that makes sense, right?

24 But then I also wanted to follow up

1 with Chancellor King regarding Senator
2 Stavisky's line of questioning on the
3 Governor's proposed 500,000 enrollment but
4 then the present fact of dropping
5 enrollments, and also the increase is already
6 25 percent since 2012.

7 My question, though, is when you look
8 at the website, right, my alma mater, a
9 family making less than 70,000 who chooses to
10 go to SUNY Geneseo, where I graduated, would
11 graduate \$30,000 in debt after already paying
12 \$50,000 out of pocket.

13 And so I know that we talk about the
14 investments, right? We expect our students
15 to make investments, of course. But how can
16 we put all the burden on them? Seventy
17 thousand dollars, and they're already paying
18 50 and owing 30 at the end. How does that
19 make sense?

20 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Look, I very
21 much agree with you about the concern about
22 student debt and the costs of college.
23 That's why we're so committed to
24 affordability. As I mentioned earlier, our

1 tuition is about \$3,000 lower than peer
2 institutions.

3 At the same time, we've got to make
4 sure that we have the resources to be
5 competitive, to invest in faculty, to provide
6 student services like mental health. And
7 that's what the Governor was aiming for with
8 the very modest tuition increase.

9 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FORREST: Thank you so
10 much, Chancellors.

11 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: To the Senate.

12 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

13 Senator Robert Jackson.

14 SENATOR JACKSON: So good afternoon
15 and thank you both for coming in. And I'm
16 sorry that I only have three minutes to
17 question you.

18 But I don't believe that SUNY and CUNY
19 has enough to do everything that they need to
20 do. So I understand that this is the
21 budgetary process, \$227 billion. But I'm
22 very concerned about the cuts in the EOP
23 program. I was an EOP student myself. But
24 I'm also concerned about the tuition

1 increases. I'm opposed to any tuition
2 increase on the people that are attending
3 college, knowing that, for example, many
4 people will not be able to afford the tuition
5 increase because of the pandemic situation
6 that's still negatively impacting all of us.

7 So I guess my question is that -- I am
8 in part of a coalition which is called Invest
9 in Our New York, to basically increase
10 revenue from the wealthiest New Yorkers and
11 corporate tax -- New Jersey has a higher
12 corporate tax than New York State. We need
13 to raise revenues in order to make sure that
14 SUNY and CUNY are taken care of.

15 So one of the things I ask you to do
16 is that some college campuses do not have
17 health centers where people cannot go there.
18 I ask you to look into that and to do
19 everything you can to make sure that if
20 someone is ill or they need help as far as
21 from a health point of view, that there is a
22 health facility on the campus.

23 Understanding that, I ask you: What
24 more can we do in order to bring about the

1 resources that you need for SUNY and CUNY in
2 order to make sure that the faculty is
3 receiving the increases they rightfully
4 deserve?

5 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Okay, I very
6 much appreciate the question.

7 You know, the Trustees asked for
8 \$120 million operating aid increase this
9 year. We think that's necessary just to
10 maintain steady state, to be able to absorb
11 increases in the costs of staffing and energy
12 and so forth.

13 Long term, we need a reliable picture
14 of a five-year investment plan, including on
15 the capital side. You know, we've got a
16 \$7.7 billion critical maintenance backlog
17 across our institutions. We need a five-year
18 plan on how will we make the progress we need
19 to on capital.

20 One of the challenges, when students
21 come to a campus and they walk into a
22 building that's in disrepair, it's very hard
23 to convince them to come to a campus.

24 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: So,

1 I mean, equally here -- our budget request
2 will give you a roadmap in terms of some of
3 the things that we need additional operating
4 support.

5 I mentioned the support to -- for STEM
6 majors as an example of a way to support STEM
7 and also support operating costs.

8 We also have additional programmatic
9 requests. There are many areas that I know
10 are very dear to you -- students with
11 disabilities, you know, doing more things for
12 our students in the career and workforce and
13 all those areas. So again, thank you for
14 your support.

15 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

16 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Assemblywoman
17 Seawright.

18 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SEAWRIGHT: Thank you,
19 Chair Weinstein.

20 Good afternoon. And thank you,
21 Chancellor King, for returning back home to
22 New York. It's great to see you, Chancellor
23 Matos Rodríguez. I'm a CUNY Law alum and a
24 proud mother of two SUNY graduates.

1 And I want -- as the new chair of the
2 People with Disabilities Committee, I
3 recently attended a CUNY adaptive sports
4 program, the women's wheelchair basketball
5 game, one of only seven that exist in the
6 nation. And I would love to see that program
7 started at SUNY.

8 But I'd like to direct my question
9 today to Chancellor Matos Rodríguez.

10 My constituents have raised their
11 voice to me about transferring between the
12 CUNY campuses and how difficult that is. So
13 I would just like to hear what you're
14 doing to address transferring among the
15 colleges within CUNY.

16 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ:

17 Well, thank you for your question.

18 We are taking a historic look at
19 transfer and we're giving ourselves sort of a
20 year and a half, two years, to really make
21 all the transfers within the major fully
22 transferable in the system.

23 Right now, you know the stories of
24 many students losing credits, losing

1 financial aid because the transfer within the
2 system is not as straightforward and easy as
3 it should be. We have an entire task force,
4 led by University Provost Wendy Hensel, with
5 the support of the Faculty Senate. So we're
6 doing this in collaboration with our faculty
7 colleagues to be able to, once and for all,
8 make that seamless so it will make it easier
9 for the students to transfer, they will waste
10 less time, and less time is less money for
11 many of our students.

12 And it's part of the strategies that
13 we're pursuing not just for enrollment, but
14 for retention of students who are already
15 within the CUNY system. So we very much look
16 forward to -- and we began that work in this
17 semester head on, and we hope to have it
18 complete in a year and a half.

19 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SEAWRIGHT: Thank you.

20 And it looks like I have about a
21 minute left.

22 You talked about career engagement.
23 And can you just elaborate a little bit on
24 why that's so important, with private

1 corporations, for your CUNY students?

2 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: So
3 when you have half of students being the
4 first in their family to go to college, they
5 don't have the networks that some other
6 students have. Right? And they need
7 opportunities to connect with the world of
8 work, to explore options, to get that social
9 capital. And we want to do more for them in
10 that arena.

11 We also know, for example -- and you
12 all know that I'm a big fan of paid
13 internships. The students who participate
14 graduate on time, earn more when they
15 graduate, and get a job faster. So we've
16 been investing in a number of programs that
17 are part of our testimony, advancing with
18 support from the state more internships and
19 apprenticeships, with support from the city
20 too.

21 Career Launch, we had 2,000
22 internships for community college students;
23 11,000 students applied. So big demand for
24 those programs. We're working very closely

1 with industry to be able to place them and to
2 update their curriculum.

3 Thank you for the question.

4 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SEAWRIGHT: Thank you.

5 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Senate?

6 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

7 I'm going to let Toby Stavisky have
8 her three-minute follow-up as chair.

9 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

10 Chancellor Matos Rodríguez, I've had
11 legislation on campus hate incidents -- which
12 I find very troubling. And there have been
13 accusations of antisemitism at the various
14 CUNY campuses. Would you address what the
15 university is doing to combat this scourge?
16 Because I find that whole issue very
17 troubling.

18 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: And
19 I couldn't agree with you more. Thank you
20 for the question.

21 And one of the first things I did when
22 I became chancellor, based on some of the
23 things that I learned at Queens College,
24 where we had the Center for Ethnic, Racial

1 and Religious Understanding, CERRU -- which
2 you're familiar with, Senator, because it
3 used to be your district -- was the
4 importance of investing in getting student
5 programming, difficult conversations, getting
6 groups together. And we got money from the
7 City Council to replicate some of that work
8 systemwide.

9 We did that before some of the more
10 recent surges in cases of antisemitism that
11 have been plaguing our nation, our city and
12 our campuses have emerged.

13 In the last year we've been vocal when
14 incidents have appeared on our campuses. We
15 have worked with our presidents to improve
16 the way that we investigate when things do
17 come up on the campuses, making it easier for
18 individuals to file complaints and to get
19 information about the status of those
20 complaints.

21 We began an initiative with seven of
22 our campuses with Hillel International, doing
23 a deep dive into the fear that some of the
24 students might have on the campuses and a way

1 to make the whole community feel safer. And
2 we hope what we learn from those seven
3 campuses can be applied to the rest of the
4 system.

5 And with some of the \$40 million that
6 we received from you last year, we gave out
7 about a quarter of a million dollars to the
8 campuses to do additional programming on
9 antisemitism, anti-hate and DEI training.

10 So thank you for those dollars.

11 SENATOR STAVISKY: I think more has to
12 be done, Chancellor.

13 I think the time's going to be up.
14 Thank you. I have additional questions,
15 but --

16 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Sorry. Can you
17 do something in 42 seconds?

18 (Laughter.)

19 SENATOR STAVISKY: Yeah. Chancellor
20 King, real quick, Stony Brook and Buffalo are
21 receiving special attention. What about the
22 other two University Centers, Albany and
23 Binghamton?

24 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: We're glad that

1 the Governor's endowment proposal would
2 commit 500 million to create 1.5 billion
3 across all four University Centers. The
4 differential tuition investment is for all
5 four University Centers.

6 There is a \$200 million lab allocation
7 to Buffalo and Stony Brook, but it's really
8 driven by those universities' unique
9 positioning in terms of research. They both
10 are the two institutions that have garnered
11 the largest numbers of research dollars over
12 a long period of time.

13 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you. I did
14 not have tuition in mind, I had the research
15 grants, et cetera, in mind.

16 Thank you.

17 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Sorry, we have to
18 hold off on that one.

19 Assembly?

20 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We go to
21 Assemblyman Eachus.

22 ASSEMBLYMAN EACHUS: Thank you,
23 Chancellors, for being here.

24 Very proud graduate of both master's

1 and bachelor's degrees in SUNY schools. So I
2 will do everything to meet the obligation
3 that we have of one-third, one-third, and
4 one-third for state, county, and then
5 tuition. I don't think \$3,000 less than an
6 equivalent school is where we should be. I
7 think we should be thousands and thousands of
8 dollars less.

9 I think I have the best community
10 college school in the entire New York State
11 in my county. I'm very proud of it. But one
12 of the interesting things is they have a
13 waitlist. They have a decrease in
14 enrollment, but they have a waitlist for
15 their nursing program. Now, I know that, you
16 know, the animated patients cost a million
17 dollars apiece and so on like that. But we
18 definitely have to put a bigger piece of our
19 budget to be sure, because obviously we need
20 nurses too.

21 My experience, as you may know or not,
22 40 years in the classroom teaching both
23 juniors and seniors in high school. Okay? I
24 have taught in private school, I have taught

1 in several public schools. I taught AP
2 courses. My kids in all of those
3 institutions got college credit, but not from
4 SUNY or CUNY schools. They were all with
5 private schools.

6 So my question to you is -- you know,
7 and I'm speaking about my personal
8 experience. My question to you is, are you
9 willing to, you know, take on and see if you
10 can't enlarge -- because if kids get credits
11 from your schools, they tend to go to your
12 schools. You know, there's no question about
13 transfer of credits and so on like that. But
14 we can't just say yes, because there's things
15 like -- I'll tell you what held it up in the
16 past. Like public schools can't purchase new
17 textbooks every year. We can't do that, they
18 can't do that.

19 So we have to overcome a couple of
20 those hurdles that are there. Are you
21 willing to invest some time right now to see
22 if we can't get more credits in high schools
23 for these kids?

24 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: You know, we're

1 very interested in expanding the ability of
2 students to get credits for things like AP,
3 International Baccalaureate, dual enrollment.
4 The Trustees just adopted a broader prior
5 learning assessment policy so that we can
6 also recognize when folks get training
7 through the military or through a
8 police academy or EMT training, that those
9 kinds of things can also be recognized for
10 credit.

11 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: And
12 we have great outcomes from our Early College
13 program. I think that's something that the
14 state needs to look into more deeply. We've
15 already got 19 of those schools throughout
16 the system.

17 When I was president of our community
18 college at Hostos -- I was, you know, the
19 president of two schools -- I was very proud
20 when I had, at my commencement ceremony,
21 20 high school kids graduating with an
22 associate's degree before their high school
23 graduation, because it was later in the year.

24 So fully supportive of all those

1 programs, Assemblyman.

2 ASSEMBLYMAN EACHUS: Thank you very
3 much. And as I said, it was just my personal
4 experience; I don't know across the state.
5 But thank you.

6 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

7 I think I'm up, actually.

8 So, gentlemen, there's research
9 showing we might actually be producing too
10 many Ph.D.s in the United States. What is
11 your thoughts for your two universities?

12 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: I think
13 generally we feel like there's a need for
14 more Ph.D.s, particularly in the sciences.
15 And that to the extent that we can, through
16 investments like the Governor's endowment
17 proposal, grow the number of STEM Ph.D.s at
18 our University Centers, that is going to help
19 us lead the way on things like renewable
20 energy and attract more federal research
21 dollars to the state.

22 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: And
23 I will echo what Chancellor King said about
24 the dearth and the need in Ph.D.s in the

1 sciences. I mean, we need to think about
2 industry, we need to think about research,
3 and we need to think about academia.

4 I think that maybe some of the studies
5 that you make reference to are thinking just
6 about the lane, about the need in academia,
7 and that might be a very narrow take on what
8 Ph.D.s get to do these days, not just in
9 science but in some of the other fields too.

10 So I think that you need to prepare
11 those students that are going into any area,
12 and give them a sense of about what the labor
13 market is as part of their decision-making as
14 they go into their education. But we're very
15 proud of the students that we're graduating
16 from our graduate programs at CUNY, and we
17 also think that the diversity of the students
18 that we produce is something that all
19 sectors -- academia, research and industry --
20 need.

21 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: And do you keep
22 data, either of you, on where your Ph.D.
23 graduates end up, say, five years afterwards?
24 Do we know, do they go into academia, do they

1 go into research, do they use those degrees?

2 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: Yes,
3 and we can --

4 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: We can get you
5 the data that we have, yeah.

6 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: That would be
7 very much appreciated, thank you.

8 And you've both answered questions
9 already about the reductions in student
10 population, and I know that one of the
11 questions that I hear is that we're losing
12 students not to other universities in other
13 states, we're losing students to these online
14 fake schools.

15 So what can we do better as a state to
16 make sure that we are not losing our students
17 to places that call themselves colleges but
18 in fact are not providing the education they
19 need, but are using up the student's TAP
20 money and other money that they might
21 otherwise have used to get a quality
22 education. What do we need to do to fix
23 that?

24 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: I'm so glad you

1 raised this one.

2 When I was Secretary of Education, one
3 of my major areas of focus was cracking down
4 on predatory for-profit colleges that take
5 advantage of students. We shut many of them
6 down. Unfortunately the Trump
7 administration, Betsy DeVos in particular,
8 put in charge of higher ed policy folks from
9 those predatory for-profit colleges, and they
10 had a free ride over several years.

11 There's work that needs to happen in
12 terms of regulatory oversight of those
13 predatory for-profit colleges. That's
14 consumer protection, that's the Attorney
15 General's office.

16 One thing that we could do in the
17 public higher ed sector is move more quickly
18 to respond to student demand. One of the
19 challenges is we have a very cumbersome
20 program approval process in New York State.
21 Assemblywoman Hyndman has a bill on this.
22 Our very cumbersome process means that while
23 we're still getting ready to launch a
24 program, a predatory for-profit college is

1 already online posting ads, recruiting
2 students.

3 And so we've got to move more quickly
4 in areas like renewable energy, the
5 semiconductor industry, the cannabis
6 industry. We've got to launch those programs
7 more quickly, and certainly making that
8 program approval process much faster would
9 help us there.

10 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: On
11 our end, that's why -- and you saw in my
12 testimony our big investment in CUNY Online.
13 We believe and we have actually good data
14 that shows that individuals prefer brands
15 that they're familiar with, right? And they
16 want to know -- they want to go to schools,
17 even online, with brands that they're
18 familiar with.

19 So we want to be able to capitalize on
20 the CUNY brand, on the familiarity that the
21 students have and their families have with
22 our schools. But we have really not invested
23 that much in fully online programs. We have
24 online classes, but we have not done -- we

1 sort of have not invested heavily in that
2 space.

3 That's why we're asking for additional
4 dollars for CUNY Online. We began using some
5 stimulus money to do that. But we feel that
6 we were leaving students at the table, and
7 that we know that if we have the programs
8 that the students know are backed up with the
9 quality of our faculty, they're not going to
10 go to any of those ghost universities that
11 were alluded to, they're going to come to the
12 brands that they know.

13 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: So just the other
14 day there was an article, "When It Comes to
15 Predatory For-Profit Colleges, No State is
16 More Welcoming than New York." Apparently we
17 hand out more TAP money than any other state,
18 per student than any other state.

19 Do you think we should change our
20 policies about how we give out TAP grants?
21 Particularly given your experience in
22 Washington, D.C., Chancellor King -- not that
23 I don't want to hear from both of you.

24 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Yes. I think

1 at both the federal and state level we should
2 make sure that there's return on investment
3 for the dollars that are provided to
4 institutions. And when these predatory
5 for-profit colleges steal students' money,
6 whether it's state dollars, federal dollars,
7 GI Bill money, and then deliver no quality
8 education, no degree -- that, to me, is
9 criminal, and we ought to end it.

10 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: And
11 I'll add to that that then we both end up
12 taking care of those students after they've
13 been abused by those predatory universities.
14 Right? Because sometimes maybe those
15 students end up coming to SUNY and CUNY
16 because it's really the only affordable
17 option that they have after they had that
18 experience. And then they come to us with
19 their financial aid used, with a lot -- you
20 know, with a bigger burden, maybe having to
21 come part-time, and not being able to
22 complete on time.

23 So the state loses twice by not being
24 hard on these predatory institutions and the

1 use of TAP.

2 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: And Chancellor
3 Rosa, I know you're there listening; I'm
4 going to ask that question of you as well in
5 a little while.

6 (Laughter.)

7 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: But I realized I
8 should ask these chancellors also.

9 So I'm sorry, Chancellor King, I just
10 got a text from a person concerned that SUNY
11 Upstate Hospital facilities receive DSH
12 funding and yet, according to a recent
13 report, SUNY Upstate Hospital facilities
14 appear to sue an inordinately large number of
15 patients, far more than any other public
16 hospital in the state, and that it appears
17 that SUNY Upstate Hospital is suing
18 lower-income patients, some of whom are
19 incarcerated at the time and are eligible for
20 CHIP, eligible for financial assistance.

21 You probably don't know the answer to
22 this question right now, but I would really
23 like you to look into it for us --

24 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: I will follow

1 up on that.

2 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Because it's a
3 large concern on a statewide basis, the
4 amount of medical debt and people getting
5 sued by hospitals and ending up in --
6 literally losing their homes over these
7 situations.

8 But since apparently you've been
9 called -- not you, but the hospital has been
10 called out as the worst offender in the
11 state, I would definitely like to understand
12 those policies and what we can do about them.

13 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: I'll certainly
14 follow up.

15 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

16 And I think I'm giving back my two
17 minutes to the Assembly.

18 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Great. We go
19 to -- oh, in the corner -- Assemblywoman
20 Hyndman, three minutes.

21 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: I thought I
22 got five.

23 Good afternoon. So my line of
24 questioning is kind of similar to

1 Senator Krueger's line about online programs,
2 because a lot of the students don't want to
3 come back. And we're talking about an adult
4 population who, with scheduling and
5 everything, online courses are very important
6 for them.

7 So what is the average timeline now of
8 SED approval of courses for CUNY and SUNY? I
9 know you talked about my bill. I just wanted
10 to get the timeline --

11 (Laughter.)

12 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: I mean, what we
13 would ideally like is to have time limits for
14 both the SUNY process and the SED process so
15 that we can move more quickly.

16 Part of the challenge is there's
17 tremendous variation. Particularly the
18 programs that require approval through the
19 Office of Professions can go many, many
20 months, even into the period of years. And
21 so it's critical that we have a more
22 expedited process.

23 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: And
24 I think also after the pandemic there's been

1 a whole now couple of years of a lot more
2 experience with all kinds of online courses
3 and services and teaching and pedagogy and
4 investment in training and all that.

5 So some of the delays are time in
6 converting, for example, degrees that we have
7 fully in-person that should be easy to
8 migrate to online. That should be done very
9 expeditiously. And the demand is there, so
10 any flexibility in that arena would be
11 welcome.

12 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: There are
13 quite a few nursing programs in both SUNY and
14 CUNY systems. But what is the waitlist for
15 those students? Because we keep talking
16 about shortages, but we're not talking about
17 how are you going to retain nurses to teach
18 when they can go somewhere else and make
19 probably three times what you would pay? How
20 do you keep staff and -- or keep faculty?
21 And what are the waitlist times for nursing
22 programs?

23 Oh, and I need my number, Dr. Matos
24 Rodríguez.

1 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: I
2 was going to say, I want you to feel the love
3 from the 4,292 CUNY students in your
4 district.

5 (Laughter.)

6 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Thank you.

7 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: We'll get you
8 the numbers on the waitlist by campus. But
9 they're significant.

10 The salary issue for nursing faculty
11 is a significant one. Some of our campuses
12 do have a different salary rate for their
13 nursing faculty. But even then, given the
14 demand in the private sector, it's very hard
15 to attract and retain faculty.

16 We'd like to see greater investment in
17 high-needs nursing programs so that we can
18 not only pay folks more, but also pay for
19 current nurses to get their degrees so that
20 they can qualify to teach in the nursing
21 programs.

22 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: And
23 I have to get you information about any
24 waitlists in the CUNY programs. I'm not

1 familiar with them.

2 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Okay. And you
3 know -- I know you know this, Chancellor, but
4 the College at New Paltz is now the
5 University at New Paltz, so I'm looking
6 forward to all the endowment dollars that
7 will be coming there. Thank you.

8 (Laughter.)

9 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

10 So -- there are no further Senators,
11 so we have a number of Assemblymembers still,
12 so we go to Assemblywoman Wallace, three
13 minutes.

14 ASSEMBLYWOMAN WALLACE: Thank you so
15 much.

16 First of all, thank you for joining us
17 today, thank you for your comments, thank you
18 for your service to our wonderful
19 institutions. We look forward to working
20 with you this year.

21 A couple of comments and then a couple
22 of questions.

23 First, not to belabor the issue, but I
24 just want to state that I share the concerns

1 raised by my colleagues already about the
2 proposal to increase tuition. I personally
3 believe that it is -- the best way to keep
4 those seats filled and to remain competitive
5 is to keep our tuition as low as possible,
6 and the best and the brightest will just
7 naturally come.

8 I also can say, as a former faculty
9 member, that what happens is when you wind up
10 kind of digging deeper into the applicant
11 pool, then there's more support needed, so
12 we're going to wind up paying anyway.

13 So I -- but I do recognize also that
14 it's on us, as the Legislature, to make sure
15 there's enough funding in the budget so that
16 you don't have to raise the tuition.

17 Second, I also have some concerns --
18 which I don't want to get into, it's too -- I
19 want to save my time -- but about the
20 endowment proposal. And I can share those
21 with you later.

22 Third, I know you've expressed support
23 for a couple of the bills -- that's great --
24 the simulation bill that Donna Lupardo has,

1 Alicia Hyndman's bill. I'm wondering -- I
2 know there's a proposal out there for a
3 20-year pension bill for the SUNY police
4 because they maintain that it's been
5 difficult for them to retain and attract
6 officers because they're constantly losing
7 them to other agencies that have 20-year
8 pension plans.

9 And I'm wondering if you support that
10 bill, that proposal, and whether you think
11 that would make a difference.

12 And then finally, my last question is
13 about the proposal for a distressed college
14 fund of about -- I believe about \$160
15 million, to go toward some of those
16 universities, the colleges that are really
17 struggling, colleges like Buff State,
18 Fredonia, Brockport, Geneseo -- the ones that
19 are kind of out in more remote parts of our
20 state, but yet serve as cultural and really,
21 you know, economic drivers of those
22 communities and actually give an opportunity
23 for attracting students from other parts of
24 the state to really diversify the area, to --

1 I can't even -- I can tell you, myself, my
2 husband and any dozen of friends that I have
3 in Buffalo are in Buffalo, even though we're
4 not originally from there, because we went to
5 school there.

6 So, you know, it also provides the
7 opportunity for people to sort of explore and
8 live in different parts of the state.

9 So I'm wondering whether you think
10 that 160 million would make a difference and
11 what your position is on that.

12 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: On the first
13 question about the 20-year retirement, we are
14 supportive of that and think we should have
15 parity for SUNY Police and folks in other
16 areas of law enforcement. So very supportive
17 there.

18 On campuses that are struggling, you
19 know, we are eager to use the \$75 million
20 that the Governor allocated to try to ensure
21 that those campuses are offering programs
22 that are in high demand that will attract
23 additional students. We also think our
24 cascading admissions policy will be very

1 beneficial to those campuses as well.

2 ASSEMBLYWOMAN WALLACE: Thank you.

3 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

4 We go to Assemblyman Gandolfo for
5 three minutes.

6 ASSEMBLYMAN GANDOLFO: Thank you,
7 Chairwoman. And thank you both for being
8 here today.

9 My first question is going to be
10 related to the building and maintenance of
11 SUNY facilities. I have some concerns about
12 the SUNY procurement process for
13 construction. As it stands, contracts to
14 build and maintain SUNY facilities are often
15 awarded to out-of-state companies, and a lot
16 of times they don't -- they actually lack
17 New York-based workers' comp insurance.

18 You know, with the public funds that
19 go to these facilities, there is a guarantee
20 of prevailing wage, but there's no guarantee
21 that local labor will be used to complete the
22 projects. For example, one concern that I
23 had was the Javits Lecture Hall at
24 Stony Brook. The contractor was awarded

1 \$37 million despite having a history of OSHA
2 violations, and then they went ahead and
3 brought in out-of-state labor to complete the
4 project.

5 So how can we address that to make
6 sure that these public funds are supporting a
7 strong middle class in New York and keeping
8 the labor local?

9 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: We certainly
10 are committed to following all of the laws
11 and regulations governing the contracting
12 process. I'm happy to follow up with you
13 further on the specific situation at Javits.

14 ASSEMBLYMAN GANDOLFO: Okay. Would a
15 project labor agreement covering all SUNY
16 campuses be something you would be willing to
17 explore, Chancellor?

18 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Be open to
19 talking with you about ways that we might
20 move forward to ensure that the projects are
21 successfully delivered in a way that treats
22 workers fairly.

23 ASSEMBLYMAN GANDOLFO: Okay, great.
24 Thank you.

1 And moving on, there's not too much
2 time left, one thing that still stands out to
3 a lot of New Yorkers is that the SUNY system
4 still has a vaccine mandate, a COVID vaccine
5 mandate for the students but no such mandate
6 applies to the faculty. There are private
7 institutions that have dropped their
8 mandates. Recently I believe it was the
9 Rochester Institute of Technology announced
10 that they were getting rid of their COVID
11 mandate for students.

12 Is that something that the SUNY system
13 is looking into, getting rid of that -- the
14 COVID-19 vaccine mandate anytime soon?

15 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: We've been
16 guided by advice from public health experts
17 and continue to gather that advice to ensure
18 that we're following the best available
19 guidance from public health.

20 ASSEMBLYMAN GANDOLFO: Okay. So I
21 guess Rochester Institute of Technology,
22 they're not following the best advice --

23 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: I couldn't
24 speak to the decision-making of Rochester

1 Institute of Technology.

2 I will say we have tried to be guided
3 by the public health experts and continue to
4 gather input. The situation of students and
5 faculty is different, in that the -- any
6 requirements for faculty have to be
7 negotiated.

8 ASSEMBLYMAN GANDOLFO: Okay. Just --
9 especially with struggles with enrollment for
10 both SUNY and CUNY, I hope that's something
11 that you will consider to maybe attract some
12 students back who might have left because of
13 the mandate or are hesitant to attend SUNY
14 schools because of the mandate.

15 So thank you both for your time and
16 for being here.

17 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We go to
18 Assemblyman Manktelow, three minutes.

19 ASSEMBLYMAN MANKTELOW: Thank you,
20 Chairwoman.

21 Chancellor King, my colleague just
22 asked about the vaccines. So he mainly
23 talked about the staff; where are we with the
24 students? Because I know we're losing

1 students from New York going out of state,
2 and we're not having students from out of
3 state come into New York to SUNY because of
4 the vaccine mandate.

5 And I know you kind of gave the
6 answer, but do you ever see that stopping?

7 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Again, we want
8 to make sure we're guided by the best public
9 health expertise on these issues.

10 ASSEMBLYMAN MANKTELOW: So being
11 guided by the best, is that information
12 that's directly given to you, sir?

13 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: We -- we gather
14 public health and the Board of Trustees makes
15 the policy decision.

16 ASSEMBLYMAN MANKTELOW: So if I
17 reached out to the Board of Trustees, they
18 might be able to update me on that?

19 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Again, at the
20 moment we are -- we have the mandate in
21 place, there is the ability for exceptions
22 for religious or health reasons.

23 ASSEMBLYMAN MANKTELOW: Okay.

24 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: If there are

1 particular students who are having trouble
2 navigating that process, we certainly want to
3 make sure that process works smoothly for
4 students.

5 ASSEMBLYMAN MANKTELOW: All right,
6 thank you. I appreciate that.

7 Next question. I know SUNY has about
8 40 percent government-owned buildings, maybe
9 a little more. As we move forward with total
10 electrification of New York State, where is
11 SUNY in terms of that? Are any of your
12 buildings fully electrified yet?

13 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Yeah, the good
14 news is we are ahead of schedule on a target
15 of a 40 percent reduction by 2030. We're
16 about 30 percent reduction in greenhouse
17 gases now, even though we've had about a
18 50 percent increase in our square footage
19 over that time period. So we are moving
20 forward on sustainability initiatives.

21 I will say, to get to the 2050
22 85 percent reduction target will require
23 capital investment. And as I mentioned
24 earlier, we have a 7.7 billion capital

1 backlog. Addressing that backlog is critical
2 to meeting our sustainability goals.

3 ASSEMBLYMAN MANKTELOW: Addressing the
4 backlog prior to getting to the
5 electrification?

6 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Right. Well,
7 yes. They're interconnected. As we do
8 building renovations, we try to move quickly
9 towards maximum sustainability and net zero.

10 ASSEMBLYMAN MANKTELOW: So is it safe
11 to say that none of the buildings are fully
12 electrified yet?

13 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Oh, no, we have
14 buildings that are -- that are net-zero
15 buildings now. But our -- and we have many
16 LEED-certified buildings. But our ability to
17 achieve the 85 percent target will take time.

18 ASSEMBLYMAN MANKTELOW: As you look at
19 the long-term goals, have you put a price tag
20 to that?

21 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: We haven't. We
22 are about to hire an executive director of
23 climate action for the SUNY system, and one
24 of the functions of that role will be to make

1 sure that we have a coordinated plan across
2 all of our campuses on hitting that
3 85 percent reduction target.

4 ASSEMBLYMAN MANKTELOW: With 5 seconds
5 left, when do you think we as legislators
6 would see a report of that?

7 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Let me follow
8 up with you on that.

9 ASSEMBLYMAN MANKTELOW: Please do. I
10 appreciate your time. Thank you, sir.

11 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Assemblywoman
12 McMahon, three minutes.

13 ASSEMBLYWOMAN McMAHON: Thank you,
14 Chair.

15 And thank you both for being with us
16 today.

17 Commissioner King -- or Chancellor
18 King, you spoke earlier about the SUNY
19 hospitals and the importance of the SUNY
20 hospitals to the delivery of medical care
21 across the state. And as you know, the SUNY
22 Jacobs School of Medicine is affiliated with
23 a specific hospital. And last year the state
24 covered the debt service for the SUNY

1 hospitals, and it's my understanding that
2 this year it's a SUNY legislative priority to
3 include the debt service from the Jacobs
4 School of Medicine with that of the SUNY
5 hospitals.

6 Could you speak to the importance of
7 that, covering the debt service, to the
8 mission of the Jacobs School of Medicine?

9 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Yeah,
10 absolutely. Look, the debt service is an
11 important way for the state to invest in our
12 hospitals and our medical centers. And they
13 are driving the production of the healthcare
14 workforce we need.

15 The UB Medical Center is playing a key
16 role in the Buffalo health ecosystem,
17 providing not only medical staff but also
18 conducting important research that will help
19 drive us towards better health outcomes, not
20 only in Western New York but nationally.

21 So to our mind, this is an important
22 opportunity for the state to invest in the
23 future of healthcare.

24 ASSEMBLYWOMAN McMAHON: Thank you so

1 much. I look forward to working with you
2 this year.

3 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Thank you.

4 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Assemblyman Ra,
5 five minutes, ranker.

6 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: Thank you.

7 Good afternoon, gentlemen.

8 I wanted to ask about childcare
9 centers on campuses. And Chancellor King, I
10 know there was money put in last year's
11 budget to expand on the campuses where there
12 weren't previously childcare centers. Do you
13 have any type of list or status of how that
14 has gone and what campuses have added those
15 types of services?

16 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Yes, I can get
17 you a specific list. I'll tell you that we
18 have 47 existing centers on 43 campuses. We
19 are in the process of launching seven new
20 centers, at Jamestown, Sullivan, Old
21 Westbury, Canton, ESF, and Alfred State. So
22 those are the next centers that are slated to
23 come online.

24 I will say a challenge that we have is

1 we'd like to be able to support as many
2 student parents as possible, so the presence
3 of a center is obviously a good step forward.
4 But then many of the centers are
5 oversubscribed, have a waitlist. It's a real
6 challenge to have flexible hours in the
7 centers for students.

8 So this is an important opportunity, I
9 think, for the state to invest in student
10 parents.

11 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: Yeah, and that was --
12 go ahead.

13 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: And
14 in the case of CUNY, we used the funding
15 to -- we're building a center at
16 Queensborough Community College, which was
17 the only of our colleges that didn't -- that
18 didn't -- I mean, there's another five of
19 them but they're in rental spaces and spaces
20 where you cannot physically -- five
21 schools where you cannot physically put a
22 childcare center. So what we did is we put
23 the money into Queensborough to build that
24 center, and then the rest of the money we

1 distributed among the campuses that have
2 centers, particularly to expand the number of
3 infants and toddlers, which there's a big,
4 big demand in the system for that. So that's
5 an area -- and I can give you the breakdown
6 by all the other campuses.

7 And then the five campuses that do not
8 have one -- they're mostly some of the
9 smaller professional schools -- they have
10 arrangements, MOUs with our campuses so they
11 were able to have access to the services too.

12 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: Okay. And, you know,
13 as you may be aware, there was money added in
14 last year that's not reflected in this
15 Executive Budget proposal. So you feel that
16 that funding needs to be there to allow these
17 centers to be adequately staffed and have
18 adequate slots for the students that need to
19 take advantage of them.

20 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: We would be
21 very grateful for more funding for childcare
22 for student parents.

23 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: Okay, thank you.

24 In terms of -- same issue with regard

1 to our community colleges. I've had the
2 pleasure on several occasions of visiting the
3 on-campus childcare center on our local
4 community college in Nassau County. It's
5 called the Children's Greenhouse. It's
6 phenomenal, they provide education to the
7 kids. And obviously we all know that's one
8 of those barriers to the parents getting an
9 education.

10 And one of the things we had talked
11 about -- this is going back a few years
12 ago -- the last time there was an increase in
13 the minimum wage was, you know, there were
14 different sectors which the state provided
15 some support to deal with increased costs
16 that came as a result of that, because, you
17 know, we want to raise people's wages but we
18 want to make sure -- it may be those, you
19 know, those same type of workers that are
20 trying to better their education, and we want
21 to make sure those slots are still there.

22 So any thoughts in terms of that, if
23 that's something we should be looking at, if
24 this proposal were to go through to raise the

1 minimum wage and index it, that maybe there
2 would be some kind of support from the state
3 to help these childcare centers both in our
4 community colleges and in our SUNY and CUNY
5 institutions?

6 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Additional
7 investment for compensating childcare workers
8 is crucial. You know, when you look at the
9 brain science on early childhood development,
10 it's a national embarrassment that we don't
11 pay folks in the childcare industry more.

12 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: I know this is
13 obviously a focus in this budget more
14 globally, but I think that needs to be
15 matched with investments in those types of
16 institutions.

17 So I have less than a minute, but
18 Chancellor Matos Rodríguez, if you could
19 please tell me how many students I have in my
20 Assembly district.

21 (Laughter.)

22 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ:
23 Eight hundred and forty-two. I was going to
24 go there. Thank you.

1 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: Thank you very much,
2 Chancellor.

3 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

4 So I am -- I'm next, and I believe
5 last. And some of my questions are really
6 follow-ups to other members who you didn't
7 have the opportunity to fully answer their
8 question.

9 Chancellor Rodríguez, I would just
10 agree with Senator Stavisky that I don't
11 think enough is being done to fight
12 antisemitism that we see on some of the
13 campuses. I know that there was an
14 allocation last -- or you announced last year
15 \$750,000 to fight antisemitism and other
16 forms of discrimination. I wonder if you
17 could just expand on what that -- what that
18 money means in terms of real -- on the
19 campuses, what that's going to result in.

20 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: Yes.

21 Well, I agree more with your comments
22 and also with Senator Stavisky, and I'm
23 obviously open to additional suggestions from
24 all of you in terms of additional steps that

1 we can take to fight this cancer, which is
2 extremely troubling to me and to the entire
3 -- you know, to the campus presidents and all
4 of us who are working at CUNY.

5 We did an RFP for the campuses for
6 programs that were, you know, supporting work
7 on antisemitism, anti-hate, Asian hate,
8 violence, all those things. Campuses
9 submitted proposals and then we approved
10 them. I'd be happy to share with you the
11 criteria that we used for that program.

12 I can tell you some examples from
13 memory of some of the things that campuses
14 are doing, but I can give you a list of what
15 they're doing. For example, the
16 Queensborough Community College has the
17 Kupferberg Holocaust Center, they're creating
18 an entire educational program that they're
19 going to share with the system around the
20 issue of antisemitism.

21 I know Brooklyn College is doing
22 additional training, for example, for their
23 faculty and staff on antisemitism. They're
24 also using the dollars to supplement some of

1 the work they're getting from the Hillel
2 grant that I mentioned that they're doing on
3 the campuses.

4 So there's many things that the
5 campuses are doing on this area. I'd be
6 happy to share what each one is doing. Some
7 are doing things that they have wanted to do
8 and didn't have the resources to do; others
9 are expanding on things that have worked on
10 the campus and how they have the ability to
11 do some more. So happy to share that with
12 you.

13 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Great. That
14 would be helpful. And when you share it with
15 us, we'll make sure to share with the other
16 members here.

17 So, Chancellor Rodríguez, also you had
18 mentioned -- you talked about CUNY's
19 structural deficit, and I think in response
20 to a question you also expanded a little bit,
21 talking about efficiencies to, say,
22 \$40 million, and some others. Are there
23 other plans that you have to help deal with
24 the -- to close that gap?

1 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: So
2 again, we -- we've been doing a number of
3 things. I mentioned some in the testimony,
4 the ERI program, which is generating
5 efficiencies across the system to generate
6 savings to reinvest.

7 We've also, for example, done things
8 like taking a look at some of our leases. I
9 think we renegotiated about nine of them that
10 are going to bring about \$100 million in
11 savings over 10 years because of the nature
12 of the leases. And we've got additional
13 dollars from the landlords in renovations.

14 So we've been taking a comprehensive
15 look, doing our part in terms of efficiencies
16 and savings, but we also need additional
17 support from the state and the city, right,
18 and we'll be talking with our city partners
19 about the budget -- and mostly these are the
20 community colleges on the city side.

21 But, you know, we also feel that it's
22 important that we're good stewards of the
23 dollars that you give us. I'm happy to sort
24 of also give you a breakdown of some of those

1 savings and efficiency programs.

2 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you. And
3 just -- I know Senator Liu didn't have time
4 to fully -- no, I'll take care of it. Not to
5 worry.

6 (Laughter.)

7 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: You talked
8 about the CUNY Labor School. And, you know,
9 as you know, there were \$3 million allocated
10 by the Legislature for the Labor School
11 capital funds. And we have heard -- and I
12 know Senator Liu had started to raise this
13 question of the welcome center on the ground
14 level so that there would be a ground level
15 entrance so that -- as every other CUNY
16 school has. And I just wonder where we are
17 with that situation.

18 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ: So
19 we're having a conversation with them as to
20 whether that is the best use of some of the
21 money for their leased space.

22 We expanded their needs for additional
23 classroom space, for the library, for some
24 direct needs. And that's what we've done

1 then. I'd be happy to provide you with some
2 information about the expansions that we have
3 done for the School of Labor.

4 And so we're having a conversation
5 about that welcome space, which there's some
6 conversation as to whether it is the best
7 instructional use of the dollars at this
8 particularly tight time that we have for the
9 university. But I'm happy to provide you
10 information on that.

11 And let me not forget the 3,734
12 students from CUNY that are in your district.

13 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.
14 It's gone down a little, but ...

15 (Laughter.)

16 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We used to be
17 number one in Brooklyn.

18 And, Chancellor King, not to be left
19 out, feel left out, I know you talked about
20 the hardships and deficits facing the CUNY --
21 the SUNY hospitals system. And as a
22 Brooklynite and having a number of
23 constituents who work at Downstate and others
24 who receive care at Downstate, I just wanted

1 to echo some of the concerns that Senator
2 Gounardes had raised, and the issue of
3 nurses, the need for increased funds for
4 high-need nurses in situations like at
5 Downstate.

6 And hopefully that garage will get
7 fixed one of these days. It's hard to visit
8 the hospital, both for visitors and for
9 families and others since the garage was shut
10 because it was unsafe. So I'm hoping that
11 that is something that's on the agenda also.

12 With that, I don't believe there are
13 further questions. I shouldn't look. I
14 don't believe there are further questions for
15 either of you.

16 There are a few questions that
17 unfortunately there wasn't time to answer.
18 If those answers could be sent to
19 Senator Krueger and myself, we'll make sure
20 that all of our members here will receive
21 them.

22 So thank you, thank you very much.

23 SUNY CHANCELLOR KING: Thank you.

24 CUNY CHANCELLOR MATOS RODRÍGUEZ:

1 Thank you for your time.

2 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

3 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: And we would
4 just urge people who want to speak to the
5 chancellors to take those conversations
6 outside so we can move forward with our
7 hearing.

8 And next we'll be hearing from the
9 New York State -- from Betty Rosa,
10 commissioner of New York State SED.

11 Okay, CUNY and SUNY, out the door.
12 Quiet. (Pause.) Excuse me. People who are
13 leaving, please leave quietly.

14 (Off the record.)

15 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Okay, I think
16 we can continue.

17 So now we go to our third witness,
18 Commissioner Betty Rosa, the New York State
19 Education Department.

20 Commissioner, good to see you again.

21 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: Same here.
22 Thank you.

23 Okay. Well, good afternoon, Chairs
24 Krueger, Weinstein, Stavisky, Fahy, and

1 members of the Senate and Assembly who are
2 here today.

3 I'm Dr. Betty A. Rosa, commissioner of
4 Education. I'm joined by Executive Deputy
5 Commissioner Sharon Cates-Williams, Senior
6 Deputy Commissioner Dr. Jim Baldwin, and
7 Deputy Commissioner Sarah Benson.

8 First and foremost, I want to
9 acknowledge and thank Chancellor Lester Young
10 and the Board of Regents members who are
11 watching today. I also would like to
12 recognize our cross-agency partners, our
13 stakeholder groups, and professional
14 associations for their amazing partnership
15 and collaboration.

16 Now I'd like to highlight a few
17 priority areas.

18 As part of its commitment to the P-20
19 continuum, the Regents and the department
20 continue to support programs that
21 successfully prepare students for college and
22 careers and civic life. Part and parcel to
23 this continuum are our Opportunity
24 Programs -- these are key -- which provide

1 critical pathways and support for students
2 who are at the highest risk of not graduating
3 high school, attending college, or completing
4 a degree and entering the workforce.

5 As such, the Regents and the
6 department request a 10 percent funding
7 increase for the Liberty Partnership Program,
8 the Higher Education Opportunity Program,
9 Science & Technology Entry Program, and the
10 Collegiate Science & Technology Entry
11 Program. Over 46,000 students have been
12 served by one of these Opportunity Programs,
13 and more students could benefit from them --
14 and we see these as critical.

15 Post-secondary support for students
16 with disabilities, another important
17 component of student success. Approximately,
18 believe it or not, 86,000 students with
19 disabilities attend New York State
20 degree-granting colleges and universities,
21 which represents a 15 percent increase in the
22 past five years. We ask for \$15 million to
23 further advance support for these students.
24 We received 2 million, which covers about \$27

1 per student.

2 As you are aware, in addition to this,
3 New Yorkers expect and deserve the department
4 to provide excellent customer service. To do
5 so, we must reverse the decades-long
6 underinvestments that have prevented us from
7 appropriately staffing our information and
8 technology services office. Allow the
9 department to hire technical experts needed
10 to build and maintain a world-class system to
11 support our programs' office modernization,
12 and update our technology-based systems for
13 licensed professionals -- teachers and school
14 personnel certification -- higher education
15 program reviews and approval, and support of
16 program offices and New Yorkers the way they
17 deserve.

18 And finally, I am vehemently opposed
19 to the Governor's intent to transfer the
20 department's longstanding authority,
21 licensing and oversight of healthcare
22 professionals to the Health Department. The
23 current system works. It works because it
24 aligns the state system's educational

1 preparation, licensure, professional
2 oversight under a single umbrella, ensuring
3 the public is served by competent,
4 well-trained healthcare professionals.

5 The proposed transfer is not supported
6 by any feasibility studies -- and in fact, it
7 ignores the licensing delays and other
8 unintended consequences that, should that
9 transfer take place, it would undoubtedly
10 bring about.

11 The proposal is extreme, treats the
12 department's dedicated employees like
13 replaceable parts, and fails to consider the
14 potential impact to the public health and
15 safety.

16 In conclusion, the department
17 continuously strives to improve its customer
18 service, streamline and modernize our data
19 system, and supports innovation. We're
20 engaged in every aspect of lifelong learning,
21 from ensuring a quality education and
22 preparing for colleges, career and civic
23 readiness, to overseeing 55 licensed
24 professions. And with said, I want to thank

1 our staff, who work so hard every day on
2 behalf of students, institutions of higher
3 education, their faculty and staff, and
4 licensed professionals across New York.

5 Thank you so much for your attention
6 today, and I so look forward to your
7 questions. And if I may use -- I know I
8 promised five minutes, but if I may use one
9 moment to clarify a question that was raised
10 while I was sitting there, which is so
11 critical. And that is the issue of the
12 average -- and I will submit it as a
13 document, I won't go through it. There was a
14 question about the average number of days to
15 register programs. It is 22 days.

16 And it breaks it down in terms of how
17 many -- in the 10-day span, in the 30-day
18 span, in the 40-day span, in the 60-day span.
19 And so with this, I'd like to submit this as
20 a working document that the greatest number
21 of days that it has taken SUNY to respond to
22 our questions about proposal submission in
23 '22 was about 48 days.

24 As of 12/31/2022, there were three

1 pending proposals from SUNY. And I'm proud
2 to respond that currently, there are none
3 pending.

4 Thank you.

5 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you,
6 Commissioner.

7 And we go to Assemblywoman Fahy, chair
8 of our Higher Ed Committee.

9 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Thank you. Thank
10 you, Madam Chair.

11 And thank you, Commissioner. Thank
12 you for being here, and it's good to be here.
13 And as the new chair I appreciated your
14 outreach to me as well.

15 I'm going to follow up on one of the
16 things that you hit in your -- early on in
17 your testimony. And I appreciated that it
18 was early on in your testimony that you're
19 giving such prominence to the Early College
20 High Schools as well as the P-TECH programs
21 as well as career and technical education.

22 We spoke a few weeks ago when you
23 called -- and again, appreciated -- about
24 this loss of students, this -- and I'm seeing

1 estimates all over the map in terms of high
2 school students that, you know, we haven't
3 gotten back into our high schools and what
4 that means then for college enrollments,
5 which we've talked about all morning, the
6 struggle with college enrollments.

7 Are you seeing and has there been an
8 evaluation in terms of students' absenteeism
9 among high school students? Are we seeing
10 less absenteeism among CTE or Early College
11 High School students or P-TECH?

12 I mean, can you -- what -- I guess I'm
13 looking for things that are going to make a
14 difference because what happens at the
15 middle school/high school is certainly going
16 to set the stage for us turning around a very
17 difficult situation in our colleges as well.
18 And again, I know enrollment is down
19 nationally, and I know we're struggling with
20 reclaiming students at the high school
21 nationally. But the -- needless to say, the
22 early numbers are very alarming.

23 Are you seeing -- is there a
24 difference? You know, can it help us turn

1 around this picture?

2 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: So -- so let
3 me start -- and you're absolutely correct,
4 the original testimony, and even in this
5 testimony I talked about the reduction of the
6 10 percent. In some of the programs that we
7 know -- Liberty Programs, some of the
8 programs that we know make an investment when
9 students are in high school. And dual
10 enrollment -- many of the programs that we
11 know are part of these transitional ways of
12 making sure that our students are prepared.
13 Not waiting till -- you know, to your
14 point -- that they're disengaged, but rather
15 making the investment up front.

16 And so that's why we're invested in
17 the P-20 process. But we can give you not
18 only surveys that we have done in terms of
19 P-TECH, we can give you -- and when I say
20 you, I'm talking about in general --
21 information that we have been gathering about
22 the dual-enrollment programs and other kinds
23 of support systems for our engagement of our
24 students, particularly many of our -- many of

1 our children in communities where many times,
2 whether it's in the sciences and other areas,
3 are not represented.

4 The CTE programs, as you know, we have
5 not only been investing in visiting, data
6 gathering, knowing that the success --
7 speaking with students on the success of
8 these programs.

9 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Okay, I would be
10 very curious to see if it is making a
11 difference and if you have comparison data,
12 sorry. Go ahead, Doctor.

13 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: We
14 have, in my view, a crisis of student
15 engagement.

16 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Yes.

17 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: And
18 when we look at the data in terms of the
19 number of students that have not returned,
20 that have in some respects vanished from the
21 scene, we need to consider the fact that that
22 crisis is real --

23 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Yes.

24 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: -- and

1 it has been ongoing for a number of years.
2 Part of what we see with our career/tech ed
3 programs, with our P-TECH programs, with the
4 Early College High School programs, with the
5 IB programs, is that they more effectively
6 engage high school students in learning.

7 And rather than being the exception,
8 they need to be the rule. The Board of
9 Regents has proposed a package of bills that
10 would allow school districts to come together
11 to create regional technical high schools
12 that would better engage students in hands-on
13 learning.

14 In addition to that, there is a very
15 significant proposal that would substantially
16 increase aid to school districts, both
17 through BOCES aid and through the Special
18 Services aid, encouraging districts to send
19 more students and to provide greater
20 career/tech ed opportunities for our
21 students.

22 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Thank you. I
23 really do look forward to hearing more on the
24 evaluation and the comparison, because again

1 been engaged, as you know, even in terms of
2 the Middle State evaluations, we have had
3 about 26 colleges that have been closed,
4 which we monitor very closely.

5 We have been very committed to
6 ensuring that these colleges provide, you
7 know, the kinds of programs that they are --
8 that the students expect. So when -- you
9 know, when we follow up in terms of
10 programmatically -- and by the way, they have
11 to follow the same standards as SUNY and
12 CUNY. I mean, that is the one thing that we
13 are very committed to, and we ensure that
14 it's the same exact standard.

15 We meet with them when they sometimes
16 identify that they're having some difficulty.
17 We do visits, technical support, everything
18 else. We meet with, you know, obviously
19 sometimes the students. Some of you saw the
20 Chalkbeat, but you also -- there was
21 200 students signed that they even wanted to
22 keep one particular college open because it
23 was effective. And the truth of the matter
24 is that that college was already on its way

1 and it will be closed.

2 So we also want to ensure that we work
3 with the institution that is closing and
4 other possible institutions to make sure that
5 we make a transition that is -- does not
6 impact on the students.

7 Jim, do you want to --

8 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: Yeah,
9 I think that the issue of proprietary
10 colleges -- I think we need to first of all
11 clarify that some of the proprietary colleges
12 in New York, there are 23 that are chartered
13 here in New York, do quite an effective job
14 working with students.

15 Certainly there are predatory aspects
16 to some of the proprietary schools.
17 Currently those schools are subject to the
18 same requirements as the commissioner
19 mentioned, as are the not-for-profit schools
20 in New York and the public colleges in
21 New York.

22 To the extent that the Legislature
23 would like to provide some kind of different
24 treatment for those proprietary schools,

1 we're certainly willing to work with you and
2 to provide whatever technical assistance we
3 can as you deliberate through that process.

4 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Thank you.

5 Just the last couple of minutes I'm
6 going to combine a couple of questions here,
7 switching gears again.

8 Nursing and our nursing shortages.
9 Can you talk about what percentage -- and
10 then the licensure from the out-of-state
11 nurses, what percent of applications for
12 these licensures for out of state are -- what
13 percent is made up there? Again, of those
14 seeking licenses, what percent are out of
15 state? Sorry to garble that.

16 And then, separately -- and if you
17 could talk about the average time there as
18 well, as you did on the program approval.
19 And I appreciate you addressing that.

20 And then separately, but it is related
21 to all these worker shortages, the
22 staffing -- we've seen a number of chain
23 pharmacies closing or reducing hours because
24 of staffing shortages. And wondering if the

1 board of pharmacy has heard from the field on
2 this.

3 So if you could address nursing and
4 shortages in the minute we have left here.

5 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: Okay, I'm
6 going to ask Sarah.

7 But the one thing I will say is keep
8 in mind also that most recently we've had a
9 critical issue with the Florida --

10 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Yes. Yes, thank
11 you for mentioning that.

12 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: Okay. So I
13 don't want to lose sight of that, because
14 that obviously -- we're holding quite -- over
15 2,000 situations. So holding that, it may
16 make the number look a little bit different
17 because of the fact of the investigations.

18 So with that --

19 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Very true. Thank
20 you for mentioning that serious issue.

21 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: Yes, not a
22 problem. Thank you.

23 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BENSON: So in
24 very brief terms, the number of out-of-state

1 licensed nurses seeking licensure here, we
2 expedite those licenses. We license those
3 individuals typically in about two weeks.
4 Average is about 30 percent of our total
5 licensees who fit into that category.

6 We are licensing in the neighborhood
7 of 35,000 nurses last year, so there are a
8 lot of nurses that we license.

9 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Thank you. And
10 we'll follow up on the pharmacies.

11 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: Thank you.

12 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Thank you to the
13 chair.

14 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

15 Senator Toby Stavisky, ranker on
16 Higher Ed -- chair of Higher Ed.

17 SENATOR STAVISKY: Commissioner, I
18 know you were working closely -- is that on?
19 All right, there we go. I think we need a
20 STEM allocation for the Senate.

21 (Laughter.)

22 SENATOR STAVISKY: Commissioner, I
23 know you worked very closely with the federal
24 government law enforcement officials with the

1 issue of fraudulent nursing diplomas. What
2 have you done -- based in Florida, no less.
3 What have you done in terms of trying to see
4 if any of the nurses in New York State
5 fraudulently obtained a fake diploma from one
6 of these so-called nursing schools in
7 Florida?

8 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: So I'm going
9 to start and then -- because we've been
10 having -- when this was brought to our
11 attention in August, we immediately really
12 started a plan in how to look at the
13 situation, assess the situation in finding
14 out the colleges and the impact.

15 In addition to that, we followed it up
16 with a memo -- as you know, a confidential
17 memo that we shared both with the Exec and
18 the Department of Health. We continued to
19 work, and Sarah will outline even as close as
20 last week we were still working on issues of
21 making sure that the letter that went out
22 describing the 14 days had on our website
23 questions and answers that individuals could
24 in fact follow up on. And that was also a

1 way of making sure that we support those
2 individuals that may not be part of this
3 group.

4 And particularly we are also concerned
5 about prior to August, the number of nurses
6 that were able to get through, because we
7 were notified in August.

8 Sharon? I mean, I'm sorry, Sarah.

9 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BENSON:

10 Certainly. I would only elaborate to say
11 that the information provided by the federal
12 authorities -- and we continue to have daily,
13 weekly conversations with them, additional
14 information continues to be forthcoming.
15 We're working closely with them and our
16 Office of Counsel on appropriate next steps.

17 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

18 I don't know if you were here earlier
19 when Chancellor King referenced a bill that
20 I'm -- that actually came out of committee
21 allowing for simulation instead of
22 face-to-face patient-nurse contact. Has the
23 State Ed -- is the State Ed -- if this bill
24 passes, and obviously there's no guarantee on

1 anything, would you be able to administer
2 this kind of program to improve the number of
3 nurses who graduate from New York State?

4 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: So thank you
5 for that question.

6 We have had several conversations with
7 SUNY. We've had conversations with
8 Chancellor King around this issue. You know,
9 we've had several conversations around the
10 standardization, because it does say -- I
11 think he mentioned 30 percent or the
12 one-third, and we have asked the question:
13 One-third of what? What does that mean
14 programmatically? How do you standardize
15 that?

16 The other thing is you know that the
17 programs have different equipment, so that
18 when you look at -- one of the things that we
19 discussed was the whole issue that depending
20 on where the training is taking place, there
21 are different equipments that are used.

22 So my concern -- and I did share this
23 with the team. When we spoke with SUNY I
24 said, I'm concerned where the ones that are

1 not going to have the right proper equipment,
2 what communities they're going to go into.
3 And so therefore standardization for us -- in
4 terms of time, equipment and making sure that
5 the proper preparedness in terms of safety
6 and the health of communities -- is of utmost
7 importance.

8 So those conversations, now further
9 conversations have taken place, and I'd like
10 Sarah -- only because I was not at the table.
11 But I understand that it turned out to be a
12 pretty good meeting in terms of innovating
13 from our perspective.

14 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BENSON: Yeah,
15 absolutely. We had a very productive
16 conversation with SUNY, CUNY and CICU all in
17 the same virtual room. And I think everyone
18 agrees that the way to make this bill be
19 something that can be implemented, should it
20 become law, is to have a common understanding
21 of what are the definitions, what are the
22 parameters, how would the State Education
23 Department, as regulators, implement such a
24 bill.

1 And so we are working very
2 collaboratively with all the sectors to try
3 and reach consensus on that, and I think that
4 we'll be able to move forward once we all
5 have a common understanding.

6 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

7 I know the chancellor and I have
8 discussed -- the commissioner and I have
9 discussed this issue, and that is the Regents
10 exam in global history and geography and an
11 inappropriate question equating the creation
12 of the State of Israel with the Holocaust.

13 How have you addressed this issue and
14 the various pushback from the various
15 communities? And I happen to be a former
16 social studies teacher, so I particularly
17 understand the Regents and the preparation in
18 global history.

19 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: Sure. And
20 as you know, we've had some conversations
21 along with other legislators around this
22 question, which obviously the question was --
23 in form, it was of concern. And I'm the
24 first one to say in looking at it, even

1 though we have made it pretty transparent,
2 the process that's used -- our social studies
3 teachers develop these questions. And beyond
4 our social studies teachers developing these
5 questions, we have different steps which,
6 again, we will share -- I know we've shared
7 with some of you; I'd like to collectively so
8 that there's an understanding of the process.

9 But nonetheless, at the end of the
10 day, you know, in terms of our culturally
11 responsive, in terms of the work we're trying
12 to do, we do have to acknowledge that it is
13 not a good question in terms of -- it was not
14 a good question in terms of a short answer,
15 and I'm the first one to acknowledge that,
16 having looked at the question.

17 Secondly, we've met with our staff
18 and, you know, anytime there's something that
19 is not -- is of concern to any group, any
20 community. We have ultimately the
21 responsibility to take stock and make sure
22 that we put safeguards and other things in
23 place to assure that our essay questions and
24 our short-answer questions are responsive and

1 culturally responsive as well as sensitive to
2 various communities.

3 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you. You've
4 been talking -- we've been talking at many
5 budget hearings about your computer upgrades.
6 Where are you in that process? And when are
7 we going to see the result, particularly in
8 the Office of the Professions, for your
9 computer upgrades?

10 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: So I'm going
11 to start because, as you know, in our
12 testimony we talked about -- there's an
13 investment, obviously, in OP and OQ. Right?
14 There's an investment that we're trying to
15 deal with. But the investment in terms of
16 staffing of our IT is not there.

17 So we are struggling through that
18 process while at the same time we've made
19 some amazing steps with -- even with the
20 individuals we currently have, to ensure --
21 and you'll see from the timeline, to ensure
22 that our OP as well as OQ are responding in
23 terms of customer service and the
24 modernization.

1 So I'm going to let Sarah speak to the
2 modernization because despite the IT issues,
3 we're still moving forward. We're hoping
4 that we can get the funding for that. We're
5 moving forward with the modernization. And
6 it's due I think '25 -- '24, '25 is when
7 we're supposed to, you know, have this ready.
8 And we have made tremendous progress with our
9 call centers and with, you know, the kind of
10 work that's being done.

11 So, Sarah?

12 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BENSON: Yeah,
13 absolutely. So the most recent improvement
14 that you can see is our new website, which
15 rolled out in December. Much more
16 user-friendly, much more accessible, easy to
17 access on your phone or mobile device. All
18 of those are great customer improvements as
19 well as having more easy access to
20 information generally.

21 As the commissioner mentioned, we
22 certainly have made some improvements from a
23 customer-facing standpoint in terms of the
24 ability to ask questions and get answers.

1 The work around modernization of our
2 mainframe is not the sexy part of this work;
3 it's very tedious. But we are making great
4 strides in that direction.

5 SENATOR STAVISKY: When do you expect
6 it to be finished?

7 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BENSON: In
8 '24-'25.

9 And we have not -- our timeline has
10 expanded just a bit because, in part, of
11 staffing issues. But our bottom-line
12 expenditure has not changed at all.

13 EX. DEP. CMMR. CATES-WILLIAMS: And I
14 just want to add something to that. As the
15 commissioner mentioned, the need to make
16 improvements in our infrastructure, the staff
17 that we need, that's why we're asking for
18 that IT staff to support the modernization
19 efforts going forward.

20 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: And that's
21 38 positions.

22 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

23 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

24 Next up is Assemblymember Harvey

1 Epstein.

2 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Good afternoon.
3 Thank you for being here and for all the work
4 that you're doing for us.

5 Commissioner, I just wanted to focus
6 on the increase in funding for students with
7 disabilities. And can you tell us why you
8 want to go from 2 million to 15 million? And
9 what do you think that will help with
10 enrollment and retention for students with
11 disabilities?

12 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: Great, great
13 question. Thank you.

14 And I think you know that my
15 background being someone who has been both in
16 a residential program -- and as we're losing
17 many of our programs, and many of the
18 programs that we know support families and
19 support our students. When we say "all means
20 all," we have to take into account the
21 different ways that both technology can be
22 used to support our students. Twenty-seven
23 dollars -- the \$2 million is \$27 per student.

24 Now, what's amazing is when we

1 about a crisis of student engagement, do you
2 think it's a crisis because students have
3 more needs and we're just not providing those
4 resources to them? Kind of, what is going on
5 and how do we reverse that trend?

6 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: I think it's
7 a combination. We have had several
8 conversations, particularly with our students
9 when we're looking to enhance the work. And
10 our students, whether it's through some of
11 the mental health issues, some of the
12 social-emotional, some of the anxieties, and
13 some of the things that they need to really
14 continue to stay focused, to stay part of.

15 And so when we look at these
16 investments, we have to look at these
17 investments across the board that all
18 children, all students really need these
19 investments to reentry, to re connect, and in
20 some cases to sustain them in their current
21 situation. So personally, for our
22 department, you know, we have taken our
23 special education and our access, looking at
24 transitions --

1 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Commissioner,
2 I'm almost out of time so I just would say
3 maybe offline I'd like to talk to you more
4 about the for-profit issue, something I've
5 been talking about for years. And I'd love
6 to continue that conversation about the
7 students at for-profit colleges.

8 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: Thank you.

9 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

10 Senator Joe Griffo, five minutes.

11 SENATOR GRIFFO: Thank you,
12 Commissioner, and the executive team for
13 being here today.

14 I want to start with the Office of
15 Professions, the second year that the
16 Executive has tried to move that to the
17 Department of Health, to split that. You
18 expressed your opposition and your concern
19 obviously. What do you believe -- can you
20 give some insight into what you haven't been
21 able to accomplish at SED that they can
22 better do at the Department of Health
23 relative to flexibility or addressing the
24 healthcare shortages? Because I can see

1 redundancy and confusion in this equation.

2 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: Well, I'm
3 going to start by saying -- and I think I'm
4 no stranger, saying this for the second year
5 in a row, right? Last year we had the same
6 situation. This is the second year.

7 We have finally -- I think you know
8 that last year there was finally an
9 investment made, I think there was something
10 like 59 positions made. There was a
11 modernization. The money that was being
12 swept was finally reinvested. So that we
13 have seen not only the commitment that was so
14 much needed being made, in order to do the
15 kind of work we need to do. And we're
16 already seeing, as we had already shared,
17 we're already seeing the -- not only the
18 collaboration and working with DOH, but
19 seeing the kind of work across agencies that
20 really is going to help maintain the
21 professionalism but also the safety that we
22 maintain in our department in terms of what I
23 call the public -- you know, do no harm, and
24 safety.

1 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BENSON: So all I
2 would add to that, and really just to echo
3 the commissioner's comment, is that our focus
4 is always on public protection. It's on the
5 preparation of the professionals. That's why
6 we're in the Education Department. We're
7 focused on them being competent
8 professionals.

9 And so having that housed separately
10 from the agency that's responsible for many
11 of the employers of those professionals makes
12 sense in the way of, you know, a good public
13 benefit, to have those two being under
14 different umbrellas.

15 SENATOR GRIFFO: Thank you.

16 The labor force and the market are
17 demanding skilled workers. Can you tell me,
18 are our higher educational systems and
19 schools working close enough with the BOCES
20 programs that exist to provide the type of
21 transition that ensures these students have
22 this type of access and opportunity?

23 NYSSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: Well, I'm
24 going to have Jim -- but we have been meeting

1 with -- we have been having -- by the way,
2 let me just go back to we also met with the
3 acting last week to talk about ways of
4 working together. So the cross-agency work
5 for us is very important.

6 But in terms of the BOCES, even --
7 we've had meetings with Commissioner Reardon,
8 we've had meetings with, you know, other
9 commissioners to really advance --
10 Commissioner Ball, others, to advance this
11 issue in terms of BOCES and CTE.

12 Jim?

13 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: Sure.

14 I think, you know, there's many --
15 there's a lot of activity happening at the
16 local/regional level, and the BOCES are at
17 the center of much of that.

18 When we look at what needs to be done
19 in terms of building stronger connections
20 between the BOCES, the school districts, the
21 business community, we really need to have a
22 focused investment by the State of New York
23 on career/technical education.

24 The current BOCES formula for

1 reimbursement of school districts is capped
2 at a \$30,000 salary. The current provision
3 of aid to the big city school districts is
4 woefully inadequate to encourage and to
5 support the kind of career/technical
6 education opportunities that need to be made
7 available to students throughout New York
8 State. And that is why we proposed what we
9 did in terms of increasing the aid for
10 career/technical education and also why the
11 board and the department are advancing a
12 package of bills that will enable local
13 school districts to come together and figure
14 out how they can approach these issues on a
15 regional basis.

16 SENATOR GRIFFO: Okay, thank you.

17 Just quickly, in the end, teaching
18 profession shortages -- what areas are the
19 most acute and what areas are hardest-hit, do
20 you know statistically?

21 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: I'm sorry,
22 could --

23 SENATOR GRIFFO: In teaching, the
24 teaching profession shortages, what areas of

1 that profession are probably most acute, the
2 shortage, and then what areas are the
3 hardest-hit?

4 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: Well,
5 special education, right off the bat.
6 English language learners, right off the bat.

7 And I will also tell you that we have
8 a need in some content areas like the
9 sciences, math and reading, English.

10 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.
11 Assembly.

12 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We go to
13 Assemblywoman Hyndman.

14 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Hi, good
15 afternoon. Thank you, Madam Chair.

16 I remember when ASA was founded. I
17 know the history, it came out of the
18 proprietary school sector. How much
19 coordination is done between a proprietary
20 college, SED, the accrediting association,
21 and USDOE? Because there's a lot of steps.

22 So, I mean, for it to get to the point
23 it got to, I just wanted to know that.

24 And secondly, I just want to thank

1 your staff for giving me the update on your
2 proprietary school supervision. It's never
3 included in what we receive, and I just want
4 to make sure that -- the numbers of staff
5 needed in that department, are they included
6 in your overall numbers?

7 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: Yes.

8 EX. DEP. CMMR. CATES-WILLIAMS: Yes,
9 they are.

10 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: They are?
11 Okay. And almost like OP, they are able to
12 have some of the money -- like they have --
13 revenue is generated from the tuition refund
14 account. And you all were able to use some
15 of that money for OP last year, right, in
16 2021-2022?

17 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: No, not the
18 OP, no. Access -- you're talking about --

19 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: No, I'm
20 talking about OP's budget. I'm just saying
21 in --

22 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: Oh, yes,
23 yes, yes.

24 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: -- the same

1 way that OP's budget was used to do the same
2 thing with proprietary school supervision.

3 EX. DEP. CMMR. CATES-WILLIAMS: And
4 for BPSS we've included three positions, yes.

5 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Okay, all
6 right. Just wanted to make sure they're not
7 left out.

8 EX. DEP. CMMR. CATES-WILLIAMS: Right.

9 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: So just to
10 answer the first part, there's a lot of work
11 that goes into it. As a matter of fact, I
12 can tell you the number of meetings we met
13 even when we knew that there were issues with
14 ASA.

15 But it's not just that school. I
16 think there was even a recent visit that our
17 staff made to a meeting with the students.
18 We met with the provost. I mean, a great
19 deal of conversations, because our work is
20 really not only to maintain the standards and
21 the work that is done in terms of the
22 evaluation and -- you know, this one also
23 involved the feds as well --

24 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Right, the

1 feds were there.

2 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: -- as you
3 know. Exactly.

4 So our work is always to provide the
5 technical support because at the end of the
6 day there are students that are in this --
7 you know, in this what I would call process,
8 in this continuum, of trying to get their
9 education and --

10 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: When do you
11 get notification when the USDOE says, okay,
12 this school is under heightened cash
13 monitoring. I mean, that's a red flag
14 something is wrong. Do you get notification
15 immediately? Does OQ? I mean, because --

16 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: There
17 is a prescribed process, and we can share
18 that process with you, that we go through.

19 So when we become aware of the fact
20 that there are red flags or yellow flags on a
21 specific institution, we have a process that
22 we follow where we monitor what's happening
23 in the institution. We are in regular
24 contact with whoever the accrediting agency

1 is, and we are in regular contact with USDOE.

2 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Okay.

3 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: And
4 we'll get you the --

5 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Thank you.

6 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Senate?

7 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

8 Senator John Liu.

9 SENATOR LIU: Thank you, Madam Chair.

10 Thank you, Commissioner, once again
11 for joining us. You know, when Commissioner
12 King was -- Chancellor King was answering
13 questions about how nimble or not nimble SUNY
14 is in terms of getting new online courses
15 ready, he talked a lot about the delays, but
16 I don't think he mentioned SED. And then I
17 think you kind of called him out on his
18 nonsense in your testimony.

19 So does SUNY have to get approval from
20 SED?

21 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: So let me --
22 I -- what I proposed was the fact that this
23 is a complex process. You have the
24 institution itself and --

1 SENATOR LIU: You mean SUNY.

2 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: No, no.

3 Whatever the institution that is looking in
4 terms of the evaluation -- the school.

5 SENATOR LIU: Including SUNY, then.

6 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: Within SUNY,
7 yes.

8 SENATOR LIU: Okay.

9 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: So what ends
10 up happening a lot of times, it will go to
11 SUNY, you know, it comes to us. We will have
12 sometimes questions. And, right, we send
13 them back, we ask the questions.

14 And so what I wanted to give you was
15 not calling anybody out but giving you
16 evidence of what the process looks like in
17 terms of our side of it. You know, his
18 comment was that we -- it's complex, we need
19 to address it. Absolutely. When I hear
20 "we," I hear "we" collectively.

21 SENATOR LIU: Okay. I mean, I heard
22 from him that the delays were unnecessary and
23 there needed to be legislative fixes,
24 including Assemblymember Hyndman's efforts.

1 And then you seem to come down and
2 say, well, there aren't actually any pending
3 matters right now. So it seems like they
4 don't have any -- SUNY or what you call the
5 institutions don't have any applications
6 currently.

7 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: There
8 is --

9 SENATOR LIU: And our point was that
10 SUNY needs to do better to compete with the
11 onslaught of online courses.

12 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: Right.
13 And SUNY -- SUNY needs to do what SUNY needs
14 to do to get there.

15 When you look at the program approval
16 process, roughly 40 percent within 10 days
17 are approved.

18 SENATOR LIU: So SED approves.

19 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: SED --
20 what happens is this. Each college within
21 the SUNY system does their thing. They then
22 submit to SUNY Central. In my conversations
23 with representatives of SUNY Central, they
24 have admitted that their own system needs

1 attention. And then SUNY Central submits to
2 us.

3 So what we are doing --

4 SENATOR LIU: So what you're saying is
5 that the delay is on their end.

6 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: What
7 they are giving you are the days that it
8 takes for SED to review what is submitted to
9 us.

10 SENATOR LIU: Which is a short number
11 of days. And therefore the problem is not
12 with SED, it's with SUNY.

13 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you,
14 Senator.

15 You can follow up with the Senator --

16 SENATOR LIU: Nah, no need. I got it.
17 Thank you.

18 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

19 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We've been
20 joined by Assemblyman Colton, and
21 Assemblywoman Chandler-Waterman has been here
22 since -- for a while.

23 And we go to Assemblyman Eachus for a
24 question.

1 ASSEMBLYMAN EACHUS: Thank you.

2 Were you here when I introduced myself
3 before?

4 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: Yes, I was.
5 I listened to your testimony.

6 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: That will save
7 some time.

8 ASSEMBLYMAN EACHUS: Okay. So
9 40 years in the classroom, both public school
10 and private school.

11 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: Yes.
12 Correct.

13 ASSEMBLYMAN EACHUS: Okay, thank you.
14 How long have you been commissioner?

15 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: Seven
16 months -- well, actually February was two
17 years of -- when I was appointed, and
18 seven months prior to that. So I'm -- I was
19 the -- pretty much the COVID commissioner.

20 ASSEMBLYMAN EACHUS: Yeah. I'm sorry.

21 (Laughter.)

22 ASSEMBLYMAN EACHUS: For you, for
23 that.

24 First of all, a couple of statements.

1 P-TECH is a huge success, I can tell you
2 that. It is in the last school that I taught
3 in, and I have seen numerous kids get out of
4 high school with college degrees, and it's
5 working wonderfully. And I agree with your
6 recommendation about making it more flexible,
7 no question about that.

8 Liberty Partnership, CSTEP, STEP,
9 HEOP -- we have to understand, these are
10 lifesaving programs for a lot of these
11 students. And I can't believe that the
12 minimal amount of reduction -- why there
13 would be any reduction in those programs.
14 But that's another discussion, another time,
15 because I will assure you I will try to get
16 those monies put back in the budget.

17 But the thing I really wanted to talk
18 to you about is what you call teacher/leader
19 prep and development. Okay? I'm sure your
20 department does wonderful things, but you
21 know what, 40 years in the classroom, nobody
22 asked me what will encourage kids to become
23 teachers. And as a matter of fact I can tell
24 you right now that these programs you have --

1 TOC II, Teacher Diversity, all of those --
2 they're not going to really work that well.
3 And here's why they're not going to work.

4 The average teacher in the classroom
5 is not, is not encouraging their students to
6 become teachers right now. You have to
7 understand -- again, pre your time, and I
8 appreciate it. We've lived through periods
9 where you've said to us teachers, we don't
10 trust you, you can't grade your own
11 Regentses. We don't trust you, you can't
12 even see what your Regentses say or what's
13 been done with them or where you maybe were
14 even a little deficient.

15 And I truly believe that that's where
16 you have to get true teacher development and
17 leadership, is back to those who are in the
18 classroom right now, make them feel
19 appreciated. And so if you have a comment,
20 I'll give you the last --

21 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: We're going
22 to share the comment. Let me just say this.

23 As a teacher, both principal,
24 superintendent, senior superintendent and of

1 course, you know, I was the chancellor even
2 prior to this, so I've spent 14 years, you
3 know, from Regent to this position. What I
4 have learned is first of all, I try not to,
5 as much as possible -- that's why I like
6 data -- to generalize. I do believe that
7 there are many places that I would say are
8 doing a phenomenal job with teachers and
9 people who don't even want to leave the
10 classrooms, they want to continue to be
11 teachers.

12 ASSEMBLYMAN EACHUS: Let's continue to
13 talk sometime, please.

14 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: So if we
15 can -- yes. More than glad. Why we started
16 this office. Thank you.

17 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: To the Senate.

18 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

19 Senator Murray.

20 SENATOR MURRAY: Thank you,
21 Madam Chair.

22 Thank you all for being here.

23 I have limited time, so I'm going to
24 be kind of quick.

1 First, I applaud you so much for your
2 dedication -- obvious -- to BOCES and career
3 training. Just love it. And I specifically
4 like that in your testimony in this sentence
5 where you said "high school students seeking
6 college credit courses and/or a career
7 pathway." For too long it was being
8 presented as "or," that it was one or the
9 other. It's great that you're pushing that.

10 My question to that, when we look at
11 the P-TECH and the studies and the six
12 years -- I have multiple questions. First,
13 where did the six-year initiative come from?
14 Why was it six? Why not something -- four or
15 something that made more sense?

16 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: Well,
17 originally when P-TECH was first created
18 there were those of us who were practitioners
19 who really questioned why the six years.

20 What we have discovered, through a
21 legislatively mandated survey, is that the
22 attrition rate at the end of four years is
23 especially acute. What the Board of Regents
24 has proposed is that P-TECH proposals that

1 would be up to six years would be
2 entertained, pursuant to the RFP, rather than
3 requiring six years of P-TECH.

4 There are -- you know, the idea that
5 an eighth-grader going into ninth grade, and
6 their parents, would want to commit to a
7 six-year P-TECH program is just really
8 difficult. And what we found is that as you
9 look at attrition rates, that the worst
10 attrition is in that fourth year, where
11 students are ready to leave high school.

12 SENATOR MURRAY: That makes sense.

13 And again, about your proposal for the
14 College Credit and Career Opportunity
15 Program, can you explain a little more of how
16 you foresee that? Because I do -- again, the
17 regional idea makes a lot of sense, having
18 the flexibility. But how do you envision
19 putting that together?

20 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: Well,
21 we have an example of it, actually. The
22 Questar III BOCES, Capital Region BOCES,
23 Hudson Valley Community College have come
24 together to create a STEM school at

1 Hudson Valley Community College. And on a
2 pilot basis, basically we've taken a P-TECH
3 program, an Early College High School program
4 and the contributions of the community
5 college and brought it all together to create
6 that school.

7 We had to do some contortions to get
8 there, because, you know, you have all these
9 separate segmented programs. What we want to
10 do, given what's happening out there in terms
11 of sort of the organic development of these
12 ideas, we feel that a program that would
13 basically allow a mixture of different models
14 would make sense. Ultimately this would be
15 the basis for state support of dual
16 enrollment, which is a critical issue facing
17 New York State. And it gets at that issue of
18 student engagement that Assemblywoman Fahy
19 had raised earlier.

20 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

21 SENATOR MURRAY: Thank you. Let's
22 please talk more about -- I'd like to talk to
23 you more about that.

24 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: Yeah.

1 SENATOR MURRAY: Thank you.

2 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

3 Assembly.

4 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Assemblywoman

5 Simon.

6 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Thank you.

7 And thank you for your support for
8 increased funding to serve our students with
9 disabilities. I think that people forget
10 that, A, their numbers are growing, but that
11 the best thing we can do is to support them
12 so they go out and become taxpaying citizens.
13 Because somebody with a degree with a
14 disability is paying taxes just like
15 everybody else, and that's, right, what we
16 want. So I think that's critically
17 important.

18 And I did want to also speak to you
19 about the proprietary college issue. A
20 number of them are in my district. So I'm
21 certainly getting emails from people who are
22 attending ASA, which is in my district. And
23 I'm getting questions from people who are --
24 they've just finished like their -- at the

1 end, this last week, their last -- their
2 semester before their last semester, and they
3 have nowhere to go next.

4 Who can I send them to to help them
5 find a place they can go for that last
6 semester so they can finish up that degree?
7 Many of these students have been getting As
8 and Bs. I want to help them move on so that
9 they can become the taxpaying citizens and
10 not be another debt crisis. So that's one
11 question.

12 And then the other question is --
13 well, answer that question, if you can. Or
14 tell me who to go to offline.

15 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: Absolutely.
16 We will work with you to make sure. Because
17 we already started that process. And so I
18 know -- I know that our staff did the visit
19 on February 16th. So absolutely we will work
20 with you on that.

21 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Great, thank
22 you.

23 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: We've
24 actually created an email where a student can

1 email to the department, the Office of Higher
2 Education, specifically for ASA students.

3 And I assume that's what you're referring to.

4 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Yes.

5 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: And we
6 can provide that information.

7 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Great. Thank
8 you very much.

9 And then the other thing is, you know,
10 we've been talking about changing the way we
11 train our teachers to teach reading. I know
12 you and I have been talking about that. I do
13 want you to look at my bill A4689, which is
14 modified from the prior version I had and I
15 think is better. And I would really like to
16 talk to you at greater length about that.

17 Thank you.

18 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: Absolutely.
19 Anything with brain research I think, you
20 know, we're interested in.

21 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Thank you.

22 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

23 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Senate?

24 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Senator Webb.

1 SENATOR WEBB: Good afternoon,
2 everyone. Nice to see you again,
3 Commissioner.

4 I just have a couple of questions.

5 One, you know, as I said earlier at
6 the previous panel, EOP, CSTEP, these are
7 programs that I, as a former student, went
8 through and were very integral in my success.
9 And so as I said earlier, I was disheartened
10 to hear about the reduction.

11 And so my question to you is, what are
12 the potential impacts on -- on those programs
13 as relates to the reduction in funding?
14 That's one question.

15 And then my second question relates to
16 the transfer of Professions. Specifically,
17 what are the concerns that have caused the
18 push for the transfer of these professions
19 from SED to DOH?

20 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: So I'm going
21 to start with the second one and then we'll
22 talk about the investments or the reduction.

23 I think that that is one key question
24 that we've explored. We've really -- when it

1 first happened, we were told like I think at
2 a budget meeting, we were told that this was
3 happening. There were no conversations. I
4 think we were totally caught off-guard.

5 And then I have to tell you, we
6 started to work at the time with
7 Commissioner Bassett, at the time, trying to
8 understand. The only thing we could pinpoint
9 it to was that all of a sudden there was
10 investment, right? There were 59 positions,
11 investment in modernization. So moving it,
12 you know, thinking of it, as you heard me
13 say, as moving it over was a way perhaps of,
14 you know, giving DOH additional staff and
15 whatever.

16 The problem we saw was that even after
17 last year, there was no feasibility, no
18 impact study. No conversation. So then, you
19 know, here we go again, the second year in a
20 row that -- and I did have some conversations
21 and asked the question why -- you know, why
22 this? And what -- what's -- you know, as a
23 data person, what are you basing it on?
24 What's informing your decision? What are the

1 thoughts behind it?

2 So I just want to save a few minutes
3 for Sarah.

4 DEPUTY COMMISSIONER BENSON: I would
5 just add, you know, as you know, we are not
6 an executive agency. We are your agency, for
7 lack of a better word. The Regents are
8 appointed by the Legislature. And so putting
9 things that -- we have a very direct personal
10 relationship with all of you in the
11 Legislature and work very closely to ensure
12 that the laws that you enact can be carried
13 out well, back to Senator Stavisky's question
14 about how would we implement such laws.

15 I can't speak to the motives of the
16 Executive, but it would certainly change the
17 way that relationship works if the
18 professions were transferred out of the
19 Education Department.

20 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: And just to
21 add, even with that, we still continue to
22 know that -- the importance of cross-agency
23 work.

24 Your second part -- we'll get back --

1 SENATOR WEBB: We can follow up.

2 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: Yes, thank
3 you.

4 SENATOR WEBB: I also had other
5 questions about it too. Thank you.

6 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Assembly.

7 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We do not have
8 other Assemblymembers.

9 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Then we have
10 three minutes for Toby Stavisky, second
11 round.

12 SENATOR STAVISKY: Real quick, let me
13 follow up on a question that I asked and a
14 question that Senator Liu asked. Real quick,
15 do you have unfilled positions in your
16 department?

17 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: Yes.

18 SENATOR STAVISKY: Yes, you do.

19 Right, now, you -- my memory says it
20 takes 22 days for you to complete an
21 application for program approval. Is that
22 the departmental request for additional
23 approvals? Or is that requests from colleges
24 to become universities? How do you define

1 program approval?

2 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN:

3 Program approval is an institution wants to
4 create a new degree program, they submit the
5 plan, the degree program is reviewed and
6 approved -- either approved outright or
7 roughly 40 percent of them require some
8 follow-up.

9 SENATOR STAVISKY: Does that refer to
10 the SUNY testimony?

11 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: It
12 applies across the board. I mean, the
13 position that SUNY has taken for a while now
14 is that -- and in fact a couple of years ago
15 SUNY wanted basically to do its own program
16 approval without SED.

17 SENATOR STAVISKY: That's why I'm
18 asking the question.

19 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: Yes.

20 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: And,
21 you know, the position SUNY has taken is that
22 there is a backlog at State Ed. That is not
23 the case.

24 There are times when a degree program

1 is proposed; when it was reviewed -- when it
2 is reviewed, there are questions about the
3 degree program. And those questions are sent
4 to SUNY or sent to the institution that is
5 proposing those programs, and we basically
6 wait for an answer to get back. Sometimes
7 there is an extended period of time. But
8 that is by far the exception.

9 SENATOR STAVISKY: If my memory is
10 correct, several years ago they submitted a
11 request for them to approve a certain number
12 of programs. Could that be behind the
13 testimony?

14 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN:
15 Possibly.

16 SENATOR STAVISKY: Yeah. Thank you.

17 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Okay, we do have
18 another Assemblymember.

19 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We go to
20 Assemblywoman Monique Chandler-Waterman,
21 three minutes.

22 ASSEMBLYWOMAN CHANDLER-WATERMAN:
23 Hello. Thank you so much. Thank you,
24 Madam Chair.

1 I am a former high school teacher as
2 well as a professor. And I came across a
3 good concept in one of the schools in my
4 district that did expeditionary learning,
5 Outward Bound, for certain schools. And I
6 know that that was a great way to piggyback
7 project-based assessment on tasks for
8 students like conferences to roundtables and
9 passages. Which we know that it helps them
10 with problem-solving skills, critical
11 thinking, and really helped them beyond just
12 taking a Regents exam. So this school did
13 not have Regents exams -- maybe one. Right?
14 They focused mainly on those kind of
15 criteria.

16 In the budget or in any of your
17 thought process did you consider schools like
18 that to support so they'd definitely be able
19 to have longevity in a college program?

20 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: Well, first
21 of all, anything that -- any program that
22 takes the standards work and applies it,
23 applied learning, so that the students take
24 the concept that's being taught and apply --

1 I did this in my own district as a
2 superintendent, where the kids would go to
3 Maritime for a week. They used simulators,
4 they were studying weather, they were
5 absolutely working with engineers and others.
6 And I know that we were supported by the
7 Legislature in terms of funding for that
8 program.

9 We truly believe that any type of --
10 you know, that kind of a program allows the
11 students to really conceptualize it, but
12 experience it. Experiential learning is
13 about really not just reading about the
14 museum, but going to the museum. So for
15 them, it's truly an adventure that really
16 many times engages them, many times gives
17 them a network of support.

18 So these are fabulous programs that we
19 want to make sure we invest in that it goes
20 beyond what I call the walls of the
21 classroom, so that students really, truly --
22 who learn differently can have the
23 opportunities to take in the learning in the
24 way that their learning style allows them to

1 focus on. So thank you for the question.

2 ASSEMBLYWOMAN CHANDLER-WATERMAN:

3 Thank you.

4 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Now to the

5 Senate.

6 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

7 I think I'm the last Senator. Hi.

8 So Pat Fahy followed up with you on a
9 question I told you I was going to follow up
10 with. I just want a clarification for me to
11 understand. So you said, I think, you were
12 38 or 39 schools that you took off the list
13 of being eligible for TAP. Did I understand
14 that correctly? Twenty-six. Sorry, 26 is
15 what Pat Fahy heard. What's the right
16 answer?

17 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: No, we're
18 talking about proprietary? That were closed.

19 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Were closed. So
20 you actually have the authority to close the
21 schools, not just take away their right to
22 get TAP funds.

23 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: These
24 were -- okay. So the 26 schools that were

1 closed were closed through a process that's
2 used, whether it's, you know, that they don't
3 meet certain specific standards. So we can
4 share with you the 26 that were -- that were
5 closed and some of the, you know, thinking of
6 who -- you know, who was involved in the
7 closure, if you will. Because we do have the
8 information. More than glad to do that.

9 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: I think we would
10 definitely like the list. And I think it
11 would also be helpful to see what the
12 standards are that are used.

13 But part of that process for closing
14 also says they can no longer receive TAP
15 funds from the state, is that correct?

16 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: If they're
17 closed? They're closed, yes. Yes.

18 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: I'm sorry, you
19 were saying --

20 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: No, no, if
21 they're closed, they wouldn't.

22 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: They wouldn't,
23 okay. But it's not that they -- so they can
24 continue with TAP while your investigation is

1 going on, and then you're going to hit a
2 moment where you close them and then they
3 can't get anymore TAP for those students.

4 And when you close them for failure to
5 meet our standards, are the students eligible
6 for reimbursement of the TAP money somehow to
7 their accounts? Or they've just blown it,
8 they've just lost their TAP money?

9 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: You're
10 talking about if -- if we've closed them --
11 if we've closed them, usually we go through a
12 process so that students know that -- it's
13 not -- the closure happens with -- you know,
14 sometimes it could be six months, it could be
15 even longer, depending. So that the students
16 really -- we work with the institutions, they
17 start to know that we're closing those
18 schools and they can move -- you know, they
19 can move into other. And we do work with
20 them to facilitate the movement in terms of
21 credits, you know, for some students,
22 whatever the degree is. I mean, we've done
23 that even in Long Island. I was still
24 signing diplomas, believe it or not, of

1 students that were in -- you know, were moved
2 to other institutions.

3 So we really work very hard to ensure
4 that the students are not hurt in this
5 process.

6 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: But if I'm a
7 school that's about -- and I know I'm going
8 to be closed by the state, don't I have a
9 motivation to try to speed up as fast as
10 possible the amount of TAP money I draw down
11 into my accounts?

12 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: It all
13 depends. Some of them even -- I mean, I know
14 that ASA was still even trying to get USDOE
15 to keep them open. I mean, some of them want
16 to continue to exist. And some of them
17 obviously through this process, you know,
18 do -- I mean, I think with ASA we were even
19 in conversation last year with them, right?

20 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: Yeah.
21 What happens is that we work with the
22 institution to identify -- and many of the
23 institutions themselves will identify
24 colleges where the student can complete the

1 degree requirements.

2 And depending upon the institution,
3 you know, they could end up with five or six
4 different institutions where they will agree
5 to accept the credits and enable the student
6 to complete the degree requirements.

7 Now, the question -- as far as TAP,
8 I'm not an expert in TAP, but, you know, when
9 a student is aware of the fact that there is
10 an issue with their college, I mean, they
11 typically will be cautious about, you know,
12 what their next steps are.

13 I do not know when TAP is paid, so I
14 think you'd have to -- we'd have to find that
15 out from Higher Ed Services to get you an
16 answer to the question about -- about TAP.

17 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Do you use the
18 same standards for evaluating the 52 yeshivas
19 that receive TAP money in New York State for
20 post-K-12 education?

21 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: The
22 yeshivas, those that are providing, you know,
23 what we would call P-12 education --

24 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Different

1 concept. Those are the yeshivas that --

2 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN:

3 They're subject to the substantial
4 equivalency requirements.

5 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: No, we've had
6 that discussion at the recent K-12 hearing.
7 These are 52 yeshivas who receive TAP funds
8 for students post-grade 12. So do you use
9 the same standards for evaluating them?

10 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: I
11 would imagine we do. I can't imagine that we
12 don't.

13 I mean, as far as the higher ed
14 institutions go, all higher ed institutions
15 are subject to the same standards. Only when
16 the Legislature has or would enact an
17 exception would there be an exception.

18 But we will inquire specifically of
19 the Office of Higher Ed in terms of the way
20 the yeshivas are addressed.

21 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: But you're not
22 aware that you've been doing any
23 investigations or questions about these
24 schools.

1 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: About
2 the yeshivas?

3 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: About the --

4 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: The higher
5 ed. She's talking about the higher ed --

6 (Overtalk.)

7 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: I am
8 not aware of anything specific.

9 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: No. No.

10 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Okay.

11 So HESC knows I'm going to ask them
12 that question next. So then they can give
13 you the list of these schools that are
14 receiving these -- I believe over \$32 million
15 in TAP funds a year, and then you would think
16 that it is your obligation to look into these
17 schools as well?

18 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: We
19 would -- our obligation would be to hold the
20 yeshivas to the same standard we hold every
21 other institution of higher education.

22 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Okay. And you're
23 going to send us all the standards you use.

24 NYSED COMMISSIONER ROSA: Yes.

1 SR. DEP. COMMISSIONER BALDWIN: Yes.

2 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Okay. That's it
3 for me. Thank you. Thank you.

4 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: I believe
5 that's it from any of the -- all of the
6 legislators. So thank you for being here.

7 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

8 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Again, we'll
9 just ask people to quietly make their way out
10 and to not -- and for Assemblymembers to go
11 outside if they want to speak to the
12 commissioner and/or the staff.

13 Thank you.

14 So next we will have the New York
15 State Higher Education Services Corporation,
16 our former colleague, Dr. Guillermo Linares,
17 president.

18 So again, as State Ed is leaving,
19 people who are remaining can take their
20 seats.

21 Guillermo, Mr. President, if you would
22 like to proceed.

23 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Ready?

24 Good afternoon, Chairs Krueger,

1 Weinstein, Stavisky and Fahy, and all my
2 former colleagues in the Senate and Assembly.
3 I'm Dr. Guillermo Linares, president of HESC,
4 and I thank you for the opportunity to speak
5 with you today about the 2023-'24
6 Executive Budget recommendations for HESC.

7 New York State has a history of
8 generously supporting students seeking
9 post-secondary educational opportunities. In
10 2021-'22, which represents the last completed
11 academic year, more than \$900 million in
12 HESC-administered financial aid was awarded
13 to support the postsecondary educational
14 goals of roughly 300,000 college-going
15 students. This represents one-quarter of the
16 1.1 million students who attended a New York
17 State higher education institution.

18 Governor Hochul's 2023-'24 Executive
19 Budget continues the state's commitment to
20 putting postsecondary education within reach
21 of every student seeking to obtain a college
22 credential by maintaining critical
23 investments in higher education programs that
24 expand access to a high-quality, affordable

1 higher education here in New York State.
2 With the \$836 million -- or 12.6 percent --
3 annual increase in support for higher
4 education advanced in her fiscal year 2024
5 Executive Budget, we can secure and
6 strengthen access to a quality, affordable
7 college education in New York.

8 In 2023-'24, we will celebrate the
9 50th anniversary of our state's flagship
10 program, TAP. Over the course of the past
11 50 years, TAP has provided nearly \$30 billion
12 to help more than 6 million New Yorkers who
13 pursued a college education in our great
14 state.

15 Last year, Governor Hochul advanced
16 changes to TAP in recognition of the fact
17 that for many students, full-time higher
18 education is not viable with other challenges
19 like work or families. With support from the
20 Legislature, New York also implemented
21 significant programmatic changes recognizing
22 that many students need affordable access to
23 effective training courses to build or
24 improve their work skills.

1 The 2023-'24 Executive Budget
2 continues full support of the historic
3 expansion of TAP that was implemented last
4 year to support part-time students in both
5 degree-seeking programs and non-degree
6 training programs at our community colleges.
7 These changes have already resulted in the
8 awarding of financial aid support to
9 thousands of part-time students enrolled for
10 the fall 2022 academic term alone.

11 The Governor's 2023-'24 budget
12 recommendations also propose continued TAP
13 support to incarcerated New Yorkers who are
14 pursuing postsecondary degrees or
15 credentials, continuing the state's
16 restoration of a benefit that has been
17 withheld to this community of students since
18 1995. Continued support in the reversal of
19 this ban expands educational opportunities to
20 those seeking to learn while in the state's
21 correctional facilities and helps
22 incarcerated individuals obtain critical job
23 skills that will be an immediate benefit upon
24 their release.

1 In closing, this year's Executive
2 Budget continues to implement the Governor's
3 vision to transform the state's public higher
4 education system to become the best and most
5 equitable statewide system of higher
6 education in the country. It advances
7 actions to expand enrollment and access to
8 colleges across the state and build the
9 strength of our world-class public university
10 systems.

11 A higher education remains the engine
12 for social and economic mobility. The more
13 than two dozen HESC-administered grant,
14 scholarship and loan forgiveness programs
15 enable students to reach their higher
16 education goals and attain the economic and
17 social benefits that accompany a college
18 degree or postsecondary credential.

19 The Governor has outlined her higher
20 education goals related to increasing
21 enrollment and completion rates, preparing
22 students for in-demand jobs, and ensuring a
23 world-class student experience at our public
24 universities. She is committed to

1 reimaging higher education to provide
2 students every possible opportunity to put
3 them at the greatest competitive advantage.

4 Under her leadership, New York
5 continues to lead the nation in expanding
6 access to a quality and affordable college
7 education, and HESC is privileged to help
8 carry out her vision for all New Yorkers and
9 to work toward our shared goal to help
10 New York's students realize their dream of a
11 higher education.

12 Thank you, and I will be happy to
13 answer any questions you may have.

14 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

15 We go to the chair of Higher
16 Education, Pat Fahy.

17 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Thank you,
18 Madam Chair.

19 And thank you, our former
20 Assemblymember Linares, as well as -- for
21 your work while here in the Assembly as well
22 as with HESC.

23 A few questions this morning. Some of
24 it is a bit of a follow-up to the previous

1 testimony and previous conversations. But
2 can we start with talking about what are some
3 of the top challenges that New Yorkers face,
4 our students face when repaying federal
5 student loans? And we've talked a bit this
6 morning as well about a recent article
7 regarding some of the proprietary schools,
8 but I think it's a challenge right across the
9 board, we know, with loan payment. But some
10 recent stats are showing that while our
11 proprietary or for-profit colleges may make
12 up 6 percent of our state's undergraduates,
13 they're -- one study, the Center for Urban
14 Future, is saying they make up 41 percent of
15 those who are defaulting, student loan
16 defaulters, after five years.

17 So in general, in addition to those
18 students, can you talk about what the biggest
19 challenges are and what we collectively
20 should be doing to change that.

21 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Well, first
22 of all, congratulations on your leadership
23 role.

24 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Thank you.

1 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: I will begin
2 by indicating that when it comes to loan
3 forgiveness, we do have a myriad of programs,
4 starting with Get On Your Feet, which was an
5 initiative of the Legislature.

6 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Can you pull the
7 mic closer a little bit? Thank you. Sorry.

8 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: So one of the
9 programs that we have is the Get On Your Feet
10 loan forgiveness program for students
11 graduating from college and giving them two
12 years to, you know, be able to pay.

13 But we also have a loan forgiveness
14 program in a series of key areas of demand
15 within the workforce, going from DAs to
16 indigent -- attorneys for those services,
17 social service child -- child -- child
18 welfare workers get that as well. And so
19 it's a myriad of scholarship -- of loan
20 forgiveness programs that we have.

21 The other side that I would mention,
22 as a guarantee agency we are now shifting as
23 a guarantee agency and have been working very
24 closely with the federal and state

1 departments of education that have designated
2 a successor for the portfolio of students
3 that have student debt. That successor is
4 the Trellis Company. We've been working with
5 them and by the 30th of March -- 30th of
6 April I believe we will be completely
7 transferring that. And the news with that is
8 that all the benefits that all the student
9 borrowers have will continue to be there for
10 them moving forward. So I want to give you
11 that response, combining the two.

12 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Okay. Anything
13 in particular on this concern, however,
14 that's coming out again recently -- I feel
15 like we talked about this 30 years ago, but
16 long before I was here -- but the proprietary
17 school, the loan defaulting. Is there
18 anything particular that HESC is doing with
19 regard to that?

20 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Well, I would
21 say -- and just following up what the
22 commissioner was mentioning before with the
23 schools that have been closed, in order for
24 any school to receive TAP, they first need to

1 be accredited by the federal Department of
2 Education, they need to meet the criterias
3 that all schools that receive TAP in New York
4 State, they must meet those criterias. They
5 have to be eligible to receive aid on the
6 federal level, Title IV. And they also must
7 qualify to receive Pell. Or those need to be
8 in place before a school receives TAP.

9 And so in addition to that I say that
10 there are set requirements that we have also
11 for students who attend those schools, so
12 that there is a guarantee that they --
13 whatever courses they take, those credits can
14 be transferred to other schools.

15 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Thank you.

16 Switching gears, part-time TAP, that
17 is relatively new and I'm pleased to see you
18 mentioned it as well in your testimony. Do
19 we have any sense of how many students are
20 taking that up or the comparison between
21 those who are still full-time versus
22 part-time? Is it still new, and is there
23 something we need to be doing to expand that?

24 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: We're excited

1 about part-time TAP. And we are already
2 beginning to see, from last term, that
3 there's certification of students but there's
4 not enough for us to give you numbers, only
5 to say to you that thousands have already
6 been certified. I would say over 7,000
7 already. But this is very early. We're
8 still in the middle of the process, which
9 will extend to June 30th. But the good news
10 is that we will have, you know, as we move
11 through the academic year, we will have more
12 numbers, better numbers to give you a sense
13 of how far we're going.

14 But comparing what we receive, over
15 7,000, to the 2,000 that were enrolled and
16 certified the year before, we already see
17 300 percent over what was the previous year.

18 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Terrific, thank
19 you. Very encouraging.

20 The DREAM Act, something long
21 talked-about. I think you were one of the
22 very original sponsors when you were here in
23 the Assembly --

24 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Yes.

1 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: -- and thank you
2 for your work.

3 That passed in 2019. Any updated
4 numbers on how many students are accessing
5 it, or how many Dreamers are accessing it,
6 and if there's barriers that we should be
7 looking at.

8 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Thank you for
9 asking about the DREAM Act. It's been a long
10 road.

11 I am happy to share that thousands of
12 students have enrolled and are benefiting
13 from the DREAM Act. I think when we look at
14 the last academic year we see -- I mentioned
15 the 300,000. Within those 300,000, roughly,
16 students that I referenced, there are
17 Dreamers that are benefiting from the myriad
18 of programs and benefits that we provide.

19 And I am happy to say that the
20 original 5,000 target students that we
21 anticipated, we're on target to really reach
22 that number of Dreamers. So good news.

23 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Thank you.
24 That's very encouraging.

1 The last question is regarding the
2 FAFSA, the financial aid -- the federal
3 financial aid form. And I understand there's
4 major changes underway at the federal level
5 now. Do we see that as -- we talked a lot
6 this morning about -- or this afternoon about
7 enrollments and declining enrollments and
8 what it's going to take, especially
9 post-COVID, to reengage students and up those
10 enrollments.

11 Will the changes help? Is there
12 anything that HESC is doing? And is there
13 anything we need to be looking at with those
14 changes? Or do you see that as a positive
15 change on that financial aid form?

16 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Absolutely.
17 We work year-round with -- not just with
18 colleges, but we also work with Community
19 Schools and school districts and
20 superintendents to really get to the students
21 and make sure that they apply. Because
22 that's the first important step in them being
23 able to get the max in terms of financial
24 aid, including TAP and the other programs

1 that we have.

2 But I see nothing but good with the
3 changes that are coming on simplifying the
4 application. And this will -- this is like
5 music to our ears when we see that we want to
6 make it simpler and easier, the process of
7 getting that application across the finish
8 line.

9 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Thank you. Thank
10 you again for your testimony.

11 Madam Chair.

12 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Senate.

13 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you very
14 much.

15 The chair of Higher Ed, Toby Stavisky.

16 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you,
17 Senator Krueger.

18 And thank you for coming, Dr. Linares.
19 Good to see you again.

20 A number of really quick questions.

21 In the past, the ETA, the Enhanced Tuition
22 Award, has been somewhat overlooked. At one
23 point you testified that there were fewer
24 than -- or somebody testified there were

1 fewer than 25 colleges involved. How is the
2 ETA proceeding now, and is it being utilized
3 properly?

4 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: I'm going
5 back to 2021-'22, which is the last academic
6 year that we looked into. There were close
7 to about 2,000 students participating in the
8 college, generating about 2.7 million, which
9 was complemented with 2.7 million from the
10 participating colleges.

11 When we started in the 2017-'18
12 academic year, we had about 4,600 students
13 enrolled. And that number has gone down.
14 And so has the 38 participating colleges that
15 we had in 2019-2020, which at that time was
16 about 38 colleges. That number has gone down
17 to, this year, being 27, while the previous
18 year was 32, and prior to that was 35. So
19 there has been a dramatic reduction in the
20 number of participating colleges, and that
21 has resulted in a smaller number of students
22 benefiting from the program.

23 SENATOR STAVISKY: That's what I
24 suspected.

1 I want to have enough time to ask you
2 this question. Last Wednesday the Queens
3 Senate delegation held a public forum for
4 people to come and testify about the budget
5 on any subject they wished. It was held at
6 Borough Hall. And somebody whom I've known
7 for many years from Queens College came and
8 testified about the Comprehensive Transition
9 Postsecondary program, known as CTP. And
10 it's a certificate for students with
11 intellectual disabilities. And apparently
12 last February they had a Zoom with somebody
13 named Dr. Mock, Chris Rosa from -- who was
14 then at CUNY, and Steve Kleinberg, who's the
15 one who asked at our little budget forum
16 about that program.

17 There are quite a few who are eligible
18 for Pell, approximately 50 or so people. But
19 not everybody is eligible for TAP. And the
20 cost would -- to include these CTP program
21 people would be approximately 250,000 to
22 \$300,000, and that's a rough estimate. Would
23 HESC be able -- since we are concerned about
24 students with disabilities, and Steve

1 Kleinberg represents the students with
2 disabilities at CUNY and at Queens College,
3 would it be possible for HESC to absorb that
4 cost in its budget?

5 If you'd like to get back to me,
6 that's fine. I just wanted to raise that
7 issue.

8 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: First of all,
9 thank you for bringing that to our attention.

10 A preamble to receiving TAP is
11 receiving Pell. So, you know, one of the
12 things that we have to look at is at what --
13 specifically whether those students meet the
14 criteria, and especially when we're talking
15 about students with needs.

16 So we'd be glad to follow up with you
17 and also to take a closer look into it.

18 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

19 Apparently there are nine federally
20 approved programs in the state. And the cost
21 truly would be minimal, and it would be very
22 beneficial to students with disabilities.

23 One last question. The DREAM Act was
24 one of the first bills that we reported out

1 of Higher Education when we took the
2 Majority. How is that going? Are students
3 utilizing it? What are the -- you know, how
4 do you see it progressing?

5 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Well, thank
6 you again for asking. As I had indicated
7 with chairwoman Fahy, the program is going
8 very, very well. We have maintained close
9 relationships with the colleges where those
10 students are participating. The network of
11 nonprofit institutions that have always
12 engaged, going back to the time when I was
13 the original sponsor as an Assemblyman in
14 2011, they all are engaged in looking to
15 bring support to the students beyond what
16 they are doing now, that they receive some
17 financial aid in college.

18 So this is a resounding success, I
19 would say, given where we started, and I
20 think the beneficiaries are all New Yorkers.

21 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you. Thank
22 you.

23 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.
24 Assembly.

1 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We go to
2 Assemblywoman Clark, three minutes.

3 ASSEMBLYWOMAN CLARK: Thank you,
4 Chairwoman. And thank you.

5 A couple of questions. I wanted to
6 dig into part-time TAP a little bit. I know
7 we're waiting for more numbers; it sounded
8 like it was around 7,000 right now.

9 Also would love to get a sense -- and
10 maybe you don't have it quite yet. I mean,
11 are these people that are getting full --
12 like has there been a formula that's been
13 figured out that matches the part-time -- or
14 that matches the full-time TAP so that people
15 get a scale depending on what they qualify
16 for?

17 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: The part-time
18 students are attending as low as six credits
19 and up to 11.

20 ASSEMBLYWOMAN CLARK: And the formula
21 would be based on that and their income?

22 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Yes. The
23 income is based on the top figures that we
24 have.

1 ASSEMBLYWOMAN CLARK: Right,
2 percentages.

3 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: So we fully
4 expect that number to multiply. Right now
5 we're just waiting for the colleges to
6 certify and send them our way. And once we
7 have those numbers, that data, we'll be happy
8 to provide it.

9 ASSEMBLYWOMAN CLARK: But there would
10 be some of them that would be getting their
11 full part-time tuition paid, and some who are
12 only getting partial tuition paid.

13 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: All part-time
14 students will be attending part-time.

15 ASSEMBLYWOMAN CLARK: Right. I'm just
16 saying what percentage of their tuition they
17 are paying would vary as well. Some are
18 getting that full -- the full amount for
19 part-time --

20 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Yes.

21 ASSEMBLYWOMAN CLARK: Okay. Thank
22 you. I'd love to see those numbers when they
23 come out.

24 One of the questions I have, and it

1 came up when we were talking with SUNY, is
2 about TAP compared to Excelsior. Is it
3 hurting that TAP's income threshold for
4 eligibility hasn't been raised to at least
5 Excelsior? I mean, it hasn't been raised in
6 a couple of decades, and we know it is
7 probably one of our most successful programs,
8 as you've heard.

9 I mean, does it seem that it would
10 make sense to have those programs be a little
11 more in line with each other?

12 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Well, I'm
13 glad you mentioned Excelsior because, you
14 know, when we look at the universe of
15 students that we are able to cover,
16 especially those with low income -- but there
17 are, because of the threshold of income,
18 there are -- Excelsior comes into really fill
19 the gap between those who don't get any
20 financial aid because they are over the TAP
21 limit, but it goes up to 125,000 now.

22 So right now we know that at the
23 federal level it's at 50 -- has 50,000. We
24 are at 100,000. So we are much better off

1 with the students -- we're much more
2 generous.

3 But I think the Legislature will have
4 to address that along with the Governor.

5 ASSEMBLYWOMAN CLARK: Thank you.

6 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

7 To the Senate.

8 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

9 Senator Joe Griffo, five minutes.

10 SENATOR GRIFFO: Thank you,
11 Chairwoman.

12 Thank you, Dr. Linares, for being here
13 today.

14 To follow up on that, there are many
15 people talking about increasing the TAP award
16 because it hasn't been done in 23 years, and
17 making potentially an additional 24,000
18 families eligible. So do you support this
19 eligibility increase? Can the system sustain
20 the increase? And should the minimum award
21 be increased?

22 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Well, I
23 basically implement all of the programs that
24 are approved and passed by the Legislature,

1 along with the Governor.

2 Obviously the reason why we have an
3 Excelsior is because, you know, many families
4 are not able to get that support from TAP
5 because, obviously, of the limit there is.
6 And so more students benefit from that, and
7 families.

8 But it's really up to the Legislature
9 along with the Governor to address that. And
10 obviously the more the merrier when it comes
11 to providing students financial aid. I
12 think, given the challenges that we have of
13 the day when we look at SUNY, CUNY, and
14 private colleges and universities, and also
15 what we need to do at K-12 -- which excites
16 me now that I see emphasizing, on the part of
17 the Governor, investing in early college and
18 also in early childhood education and
19 kindergarten -- all of those are able to
20 increase the pipeline to college and give us
21 greater benefits, in addition to the
22 non-credential degrees that we're pursuing.

23 SENATOR GRIFFO: So with expanded TAP
24 and support for part-time students at both

1 the degree-seeking programs and non-degree
2 training programs at the community colleges,
3 have you seen that have a noticeable impact
4 on TAP utilization?

5 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: There would
6 definitely be in the decline that we have in
7 college, especially two-year colleges. The
8 expansion of TAP, but also focusing a lot,
9 like the Governor has decided to invest
10 \$20 million in Early College and P-TECH
11 programs, in expanding that, I think that
12 that would go a long way in helping prepare
13 and align students to enter college, whether
14 they're going for a degree or nondegree --
15 and that's where part-time comes into play
16 now in a big way.

17 I think all of those efforts are
18 extremely beneficial, and I think we also
19 need -- and if I take a moment to just say,
20 what I heard earlier today from the two
21 chancellors and I heard from the commissioner
22 of Education -- I know the three of them. In
23 fact I went to -- I did my master's with the
24 commissioner at City College. I know them

1 well. But we need to do a different type of
2 realignment with the challenges of the day,
3 which I'm excited about, knowing both
4 chancellors and the private schools and
5 everybody else, but especially the two large
6 systems that we have, with K-12, so that we
7 can really have efforts to a pipeline that
8 will get students to get to college, whether
9 for degree or nondegree. And at the end of
10 the day they will learn a job, whether they
11 have a degree or they have a credential for
12 it.

13 That's what we need to really get
14 across, and clear the air to do that. I'm
15 prepared to work closely with that, pushing
16 forward the Governor's initiative within this
17 budget.

18 SENATOR GRIFFO: In 2010 the Graduate
19 TAP was eliminated for New York students, so
20 many think that if we reestablished a program
21 like that and focus it on some of the
22 high-needs fields right now -- nursing,
23 education, STEM -- that could address some of
24 the workforce shortage issues and helping

1 students in need of that type of assistance.

2 Would you agree that something like
3 that should be reintroduced and supported?

4 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: I think the
5 key is going to be in those critical areas of
6 needs, whether you talk about teaching or the
7 health field, and we need to be laser-focused
8 on those.

9 But we also need to make sure that in
10 the private sector there is alignment there
11 for -- so that students know that when they
12 are finishing with their degree or
13 credential, there is something waiting for
14 them there, and that's the motivation. And
15 that's what I think we need to continue to
16 focus on. And I'm excited about the way that
17 the Governor is really approaching it.

18 SENATOR GRIFFO: Thank you.

19 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.
20 Assembly.

21 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We go to
22 Assemblyman Ra, five minutes.

23 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: Good afternoon,
24 Dr. Linares.

1 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Good
2 afternoon.

3 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: So I'm going to ask
4 you about a program that I believe I've asked
5 you about a number of times in the past, and,
6 you know, you've been kind enough to provide
7 information to our office if you didn't have
8 it with you. It's two programs that are
9 designed to help with I think a sector that
10 we need people going into, and that's the
11 Child Welfare Work Incentive Scholarship and
12 the Child Welfare Worker Loan Forgiveness
13 Incentive Program.

14 So after the hearing last year you had
15 provided some numbers to our office in terms
16 of how many people have been applying to
17 these programs. So I'm just wondering if you
18 have them or if you could provide for us
19 updated numbers for 2021 of these number of
20 students who applied for either of those --
21 each of those programs.

22 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: We have it to
23 provide you with those numbers.

24 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: Okay. Do you know --

1 I know from 2020, from the information you
2 provided last year, there was -- on the loan
3 forgiveness program there wasn't currently
4 funding to open it to any new applicants. Do
5 you know if the program was able to take on
6 new applicants in 2021?

7 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: I missed your
8 beginning of the question.

9 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: You had indicated
10 that in 2020 there wasn't funding available
11 to -- for any new applicants to come into the
12 loan forgiveness program. Do you know if
13 there was money available for any new
14 applicants in 2021?

15 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: You're not
16 referring to the STEM program --

17 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: No, the -- this
18 same -- the Child Welfare Worker Loan
19 Forgiveness Incentive Program.

20 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: No, I would
21 have to look into that specifically and then
22 get back to you.

23 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: Okay. And then the
24 last thing, just regarding that topic, you

1 know, as I said earlier, I think this is a
2 sector that needs people wanting to go into
3 it. We've talked a lot about finding ways to
4 retain people, finding ways to have
5 incentives, so I think these are good
6 programs. And they've been kept at a \$50,000
7 each level for a number of years.

8 And I think -- you know, I look
9 forward to getting updated data from you, but
10 I think the data shows that maybe if we put a
11 little bit more into them we might have more
12 of an opportunity to recruit workers into
13 these fields. So I look forward to working
14 with you on that and trying to recruit people
15 into a sector that needs people willing to do
16 that work. It's difficult work, but it's
17 rewarding work.

18 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Yeah. We're
19 limited by how much allocation is there to --
20 in those particular areas. But we're happy
21 to work with you, and hopefully we can
22 expand.

23 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: Okay. Thank you.

24 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Senate?

1 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you very
2 much.

3 I think it's just me. How are you,
4 Dr. Linares? So people are calling you
5 Assemblymember Linares, but some of them know
6 you from when you were a councilmember before
7 either of us hit Albany.

8 (Laughter.)

9 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: So we're going
10 back a long time.

11 So I know you know that I was going to
12 ask you this question, and I think you were
13 here when I was asking the commissioner of
14 Education.

15 So there are apparently 52 -- or at
16 least in 2020 there were 52 yeshivas getting
17 TAP funds for -- I'm sorry, for approximately
18 5,000 students -- excuse me, 7388 students.

19 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Seven
20 thousand two hundred.

21 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: So tell me,
22 because the Department of Education wasn't
23 really clear, how does it work? Does TAP
24 supposedly work exactly the same way with

1 these schools as it does for other schools?

2 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Yes. As I
3 explained before to the chairwoman, the way
4 TAP is made available to any school is based
5 on a number of criterias. And those criteria
6 include you having the ability to receive aid
7 at a federal level, based on Chapter IV. You
8 also have to be accredited by an accrediting
9 institution recognized by the Department
10 of -- the State Education Department. You
11 have to be able to receive Pell.

12 And only after all of those fall into
13 place, then the school -- you know, the
14 students attending that school will receive
15 TAP.

16 The 52 schools that you're mentioning
17 are -- receive about 7,200, roughly aid --
18 TAP assistance. And for the students -- for
19 those schools that there is also -- when we
20 talk about the schools that you're referring
21 to, the 52, there are also requirements that
22 they must meet in order for them as
23 accredited schools, in order for whatever
24 credits are earned by those students, that

1 those credits are transferable to other
2 schools that the students go.

3 So that -- those are the criterias
4 that lead for schools to receive, but that's
5 across the board that we follow with any
6 school that receives TAP.

7 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: So does HESC do
8 the review of these schools' credentials and
9 qualifications to be eligible to receive TAP?
10 Or does SED?

11 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: No, I believe
12 in earlier testimony by the commissioner she
13 referred to the process where there is -- if
14 there are questions about where any school
15 may be in terms of those qualifications that
16 are mandated, they come into question, then
17 there's a process that the state has, that
18 the commissioner of Education has, to look
19 into and hold accountable, so -- to see that
20 they are met.

21 And if they are not, then they're
22 closed, as she indicated for 26 schools.

23 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: So first the
24 school asks you and then you pass them along

1 to SED? Or the school knows they must first
2 get through the SED process before the
3 evidence can be submitted to HESC to approve
4 TAP? What's the order?

5 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Well, we --
6 we work with all of the schools that certify
7 the students, and we look to make sure that
8 all of the requirements that we must observe,
9 along with other partners -- and then should
10 there be questions about the process, I think
11 that what kicks in the department -- the
12 State Education Department that looks into
13 anything that may be missing in the process.

14 So the question, I would say, is that
15 for students who may have been in a school
16 that may have closed, obviously the student,
17 when the student moves to another school,
18 then obviously we will look, you know, to
19 make sure that if that student is entitled to
20 financial aid, that the financial aid goes
21 with the student.

22 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: And the school
23 has to be degree-granting?

24 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: I'm sorry?

1 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: The institution
2 has to be an institution that provides a
3 degree?

4 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: It needs to
5 be an institution that is accredited, and it
6 needs to be an institution that provides an
7 accredited program for no less than three
8 years. So that is another -- that is another
9 area or another specific thing that the
10 school must provide.

11 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: And are you going
12 to be able to provide me a list of the names
13 and addresses of those 52 institutions?

14 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Happy to
15 share it with you.

16 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Okay. Thank you.

17 I don't think I have any other
18 questions.

19 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: So we go to
20 Assemblyman Eachus.

21 ASSEMBLYMAN EACHUS: Thank you,
22 Madam Chair.

23 Just to work off what Senator Krueger
24 was asking you, I'm going to make a statement

1 and you can tell me whether it's correct or
2 not: Students that receive TAP must go to
3 accredited schools and those schools must
4 have credits that can transfer to other
5 institutions.

6 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: (Inaudible.)

7 ASSEMBLYMAN EACHUS: Is that a correct
8 statement? Again, I'll repeat it so that I
9 stay within my time.

10 That students who receive TAP must go
11 to accredited schools and those schools must
12 have credits that can transfer to other
13 institutions.

14 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: When I
15 referred to that specific statement, it was
16 in relationship to a set of schools that the
17 Senator, the chair was asking.

18 ASSEMBLYMAN EACHUS: Yeah, yeah, yeah.
19 No, but --

20 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: But -- yeah,
21 when you are attending an accredited school
22 in the State of New York, it means that those
23 credits are transferable.

24 ASSEMBLYMAN EACHUS: Okay. That's --

1 I just wanted to make sure I heard it. It
2 was quite lengthy. And I'm sure Senator
3 Krueger thanks you for your answers; so do I.

4 I really have one question. You
5 talked about the HESC money going to, you
6 know, county or state correctional
7 facilities, incarcerated folks. Does the
8 corporation have any responsibility for
9 encouraging colleges or other institutions to
10 participate at the correctional institutions?

11 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Well, let me
12 just share with you the registration process
13 began last fall. And I'm happy to share that
14 within this week, within days, we will have
15 an online process available that would allow
16 students to be registered.

17 The reason is simple -- that, you
18 know, if we go back to the Dreamers,
19 incarcerated individuals have no access to
20 the internet, they have no phone, they have
21 no way of communicating. So registering is
22 not an easy thing. We have to address that.

23 So we have been working very hard with
24 the New York Consortium for Higher Education,

1 who have been working with us to help
2 delineate an easier way to register those
3 students.

4 So we are -- we think it's a great
5 benefit for students to be able to have an
6 opportunity to get an education --

7 ASSEMBLYMAN EACHUS: I do too. And
8 I'll just stay within my time. What I was
9 looking more for is encouraging colleges or
10 institutions to participate in these
11 programs.

12 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: I believe
13 that the greatest encouragement is that
14 finally we are providing financial aid for
15 those students and that over 30 programs that
16 we have with about 60 different colleges that
17 have this type of program offering to about
18 40 correctional facilities. Now that they
19 have this incentive, more colleges, I
20 believe, will step up to really be part of
21 this initiative.

22 ASSEMBLYMAN EACHUS: Thank you.

23 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Senate, any?

24 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: The Senate is

1 complete.

2 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We have three
3 additional Assemblymembers. So we go first
4 to Assemblywoman Seawright.

5 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SEAWRIGHT: Thank you,
6 Chair Weinstein.

7 And it's good to see you. Good
8 afternoon.

9 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Good
10 afternoon.

11 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SEAWRIGHT: I commend
12 the Governor's proposal to increase TAP
13 funding for part-time students. However,
14 students with disabilities have yet again
15 been left out.

16 So would you support TAP for students
17 with disabilities?

18 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: I believe
19 that when we talk about TAP, TAP is for all
20 students, including students with
21 disabilities. And if there are any
22 impediments for those opportunities for
23 students, then they need to be addressed.

24 So, you know, when we think about this

1 expansion of TAP, it needs to include all
2 students that could benefit from this.

3 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SEAWRIGHT: Including
4 part-time students with disabilities.

5 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Yes.

6 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SEAWRIGHT: Thank you.

7 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Next we go to
8 Assemblywoman Hyndman.

9 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Thank you,
10 Dr. Linares. Always good to see you.

11 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Same here.

12 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Doubling down
13 on Chair Fahy's question about the recoupment
14 of TAP funds. When a school closes, like in
15 the case of the proprietary college that's
16 going through trouble now, and the steps that
17 you delineated that a school has to be
18 recognized by the USDOE, has to be
19 accredited, has to have Pell and then receive
20 TAP -- at what point when the USDOE puts a
21 school on for like heightened cash
22 monitoring, which means something is wrong,
23 they're slowing down the disbursements, at
24 what point does HESC get involved with

1 auditing the school to stop the TAP money
2 that is usually given in the financial aid
3 package to a student? Number one.

4 And as far as TAP audits, like how
5 many TAP audits of higher education
6 institutions has TAP done in the last year or
7 so? I ask because I knew when schools got a
8 TAP audit it was like almost closure, because
9 having to find that money instantly to pay
10 back the state was a lot.

11 So where does -- at what point does
12 HESC say a school's been put on heightened
13 cash monitoring, we have to now intercede?
14 When does that happen? And how does the
15 state get its money back?

16 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Well, there
17 is a mechanism that the state has in place
18 whenever there are issues or questions about
19 a given school, which was described by the
20 commissioner earlier today when she referred
21 to the 26 schools that have been closed.

22 So our job is to really make sure that
23 the students that are entitled to receive the
24 financial aid do get it. When the process

1 that unfolds with questions about any
2 particular school comes into play, that's
3 when we then can take note to address that.
4 But we do that in concert with the process
5 that unfolds, which is under the purview of
6 the State Education Department.

7 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: So a school
8 has lost their accreditation, the USDOE says,
9 Okay, we're going to slow down your process.
10 That's when HESC would jump in and say, We're
11 going to get involved in the process too?

12 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Well, the
13 process basically dictates what position we
14 take. And obviously when we have students
15 that were attending that particular school,
16 then we will have to look -- in the same way
17 that the State Education Department does, and
18 with any institution that comes into
19 question. Because we have to look and
20 safeguard, you know, the well-being of the
21 student; in this case, the financial aid that
22 they're entitled to.

23 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Okay, thank
24 you.

1 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

2 And our final questioner is

3 Assemblyman Epstein.

4 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: First of all, I

5 want to thank you for all you've done for

6 New York. And I really appreciate your

7 leadership here on HESC.

8 How many people have applied for

9 Excelsior this year?

10 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: The last

11 recording year, '21-'22, we had close to

12 30,000 students applying.

13 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: And how many

14 were eligible?

15 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Actually,

16 30,000 were receiving the scholarship.

17 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: So how many

18 people applied?

19 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: And in the

20 previous year --

21 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Yeah.

22 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: In the

23 previous three years, roughly about

24 36,000 students applied, and about half of

1 them received the scholarship. Which is
2 consistent with TAP.

3 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: So about 36,000
4 applied, about half received it?

5 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Half of
6 them -- half of the 36,000 received
7 Excelsior.

8 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: And of the ones
9 who didn't receive the Excelsior, did those
10 students attend New York schools?

11 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: All of them.
12 I mean --

13 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: But they didn't
14 get Excelsior. Did those students continue
15 to attend New York schools, the ones that
16 didn't get Excelsior?

17 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: The students
18 that did not receive --

19 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Yeah.

20 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: That's a
21 question that I will have to look into that
22 and get back to you.

23 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: So could you get
24 that information? I'd like to know, if we're

1 turning people down, what happens to them.

2 The same thing with the DREAM Act.

3 How many people applied for the DREAM Act
4 last year, do you know?

5 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: We're -- you
6 know, we can -- we're still sorting those --
7 remember, the DREAM started and then we had
8 the pandemic and so forth.

9 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Understandable.

10 It would be great to know how many
11 people applied and then how many people
12 actually got it, and then what happened to
13 the people who didn't get it.

14 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Yeah. The
15 same question could be asked for the TAP
16 recipients who applied. Fifty percent get
17 it, so 50 percent don't get it.

18 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: And what happens
19 to those people? Because we're seeing a
20 crisis in our higher ed because we're seeing
21 less people now attending our schools. But
22 if we're turning people down for TAP or
23 Excelsior and they don't go to our schools,
24 we need to know why we turned them down and

1 what barriers we put in front of them to
2 prevent them from getting TAP and Excelsior.

3 It would be great to also know the
4 number of students who have applied for
5 extended TAP because they've run out. Not
6 everyone gets to be finished in college in
7 four years. And I know I've heard from
8 students who have said they needed additional
9 TAP and requested additional TAP but were
10 denied additional TAP. Great to know that
11 data as well.

12 Because I think we're hearing from our
13 institutions that we're running out of
14 students, but then we're also turning down
15 students who could attend our schools.

16 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: I think you
17 asked the million-dollar question, which
18 needs answers in multiple places. And that's
19 why I say the answer has to be looking
20 especially at our two large systems that we
21 have, SUNY and CUNY, and we have to look at
22 the Department of Education, but we also need
23 to look at the Legislature along with the
24 Governor.

1 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: I look forward
2 to seeing those in writing, those answers.
3 Thank you.

4 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Thank you.

5 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

6 President Linares, there are no
7 further questions for you. Thank you for
8 being with us today.

9 HESC PRESIDENT LINARES: Thank you
10 very much for the opportunity.

11 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Look forward to
12 continued conversations.

13 So now we start the portion of the
14 hearing that is the nongovernmental portion.
15 And all of the witnesses from now on are in
16 panels, so our first panel which is listed on
17 the witness list is Panel B: Professional
18 Staff Congress - CUNY, James Davis,
19 president; Faculty Federation of Erie
20 Community College, Andrew Sako, president;
21 United University Professions, Frederick
22 Kowal, president; New York State University
23 Police Lieutenants Benevolent Association,
24 James McCartney, director; and GSEU-SWA 1104,

1 Andrew Dobbyn, state president.

2 So just as a reminder, you each have
3 three minutes to make your presentation.
4 After the time -- after all of you have
5 presented, then there will be opportunity for
6 individual members to ask questions.

7 And again, members, it's three minutes
8 to both ask the question and to have the
9 answer. So please leave time for the panel
10 members to answer.

11 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Hi, there. I'm
12 going to start with my left, your right, and
13 just run down. And if you'd introduce
14 yourself first.

15 MR. McCARTNEY: I'm James McCartney.

16 MR. DOBBYN: Andrew Dobbyn.

17 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Okay.

18 MR. SAKO: Andrew Sako.

19 DR. DAVIS: James Davis.

20 DR. KOWAL: Fred Kowal.

21 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you so
22 much.

23 Starting from my left.

24 MR. McCARTNEY: Good evening. Let

1 me --

2 DR. KOWAL: It's still afternoon.

3 (Laughter.)

4 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: You thought it
5 was going to be evening.

6 (Laughter.)

7 MR. McCARTNEY: Good. It's pretty
8 close.

9 Good afternoon. My name's James
10 McCartney, and I'm director of the New York
11 State University Police Lieutenants and
12 president of the PBA of New York State. I've
13 had the honor of serving as a New York State
14 University police officer for 23 years.

15 In this session, pension parity is our
16 number-one priority. Our members work under
17 an outdated and uncompetitive 25-year
18 retirement, while 96 percent of police and
19 firefighters receive a 20-year pension.
20 Governor Hochul has twice vetoed your pension
21 parity bills, and we are asking you to
22 include the 20-year in your one-house bills
23 to force the issue during budget
24 negotiations.

1 As police officers, we are acutely
2 aware of the dangers in modern society,
3 including on our campuses. Just last week a
4 Temple University police officer was murdered
5 while serving the community he loved, and
6 there was also a mass shooting at Michigan
7 State University where three students lost
8 their lives and many more were wounded.

9 In the past two years, officers were
10 fired upon at a university hospital, a
11 student was taken hostage at gunpoint at
12 SUNY Brockport, and a number of illegal
13 handguns were seized on campuses across the
14 state. In 2021 our officers saved the lives
15 of 587 individuals through mental health
16 custodial arrests and performed an additional
17 1400 welfare checks.

18 A major component of our
19 community-centric policing is ensuring that
20 we have diversity to reflect our campus
21 communities. Approximately 20 percent of
22 State University police officers are female,
23 but we have a long way to go to achieve
24 Governor Hochul's challenge of 30 percent

1 females by 2030.

2 In April we lost a highly qualified
3 female officer to the Troopers, where she
4 will receive higher pay and a 20-year
5 pension. With the four upcoming Trooper
6 academies it will be even more difficult to
7 recruit female and diverse officers.

8 Competing police agencies constantly
9 advertise they accept lateral transfers from
10 New York State University police officers,
11 largely because of our expertise in community
12 policing and deescalation. Downstate we lost
13 a black male lieutenant who accepted a
14 demotion to go as a police officer to a
15 neighboring agency that came with an instant
16 \$20,000 pay raise and a 20-year retirement
17 and credit for prior service.

18 Over the past two years, we have lost
19 114 State University police officers, only 19
20 of which were due to retirements. Our former
21 colleagues tell us the 25-year retirement is
22 the leading reason for their departure.

23 Just last week, north of here,
24 Saratoga County approved a 20-year retirement

1 for their sheriff deputies, realizing it was
2 critical to retaining experienced officers.

3 While the projected cost of the
4 20-year retirement is \$67 million, every
5 officer that walks out the door represents
6 approximately \$120,000 lost in training and
7 equipment costs for their first year of
8 service, not to mention invaluable on-the-job
9 experience.

10 For these reasons, we are respectfully
11 requesting that the Legislature include our
12 20-year retirement in your one-house budgets
13 for it to be included in the final state
14 budget.

15 I want to thank you for the
16 opportunity to present this testimony, and I
17 welcome any questions you may have.

18 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

19 MR. DOBBYN: Hello, everyone. It's
20 Groundhog Day at the Higher Ed Committee,
21 because I'm here to testify about a thing
22 I've testified about three or four times now,
23 and probably at least 50 percent of you have
24 either talked to me or someone else about

1 this issue.

2 And that issue, of course, is the
3 insane prospect of having to pay between 8 to
4 20 percent of your income upfront to your
5 employer in order to work. And that is the
6 pay-to-work fee system, which myself and my
7 members deal with as graduate assistants and
8 graduate research assistants and graduate
9 grading assistants within the SUNY system.

10 I'm the state president of the
11 Graduate Student Employees Union. I
12 represent approximately 5000 GAs, TAs, and
13 RAs across the state, principally at the SUNY
14 university centers, and we have a hand in a
15 majority of the teaching or research that
16 happens in the SUNY university center system.

17 Yet we make very little money. We are
18 paid a small stipend in order to support
19 ourselves, and that stipend is the only form
20 of monetary income we are allowed to earn by
21 contract because our employment forbids us
22 from seeking outside employment. And on top
23 of that, we have to pay back large
24 percentages of our income in order to be

1 eligible as students. And this is because
2 while tuition remission is part of our pay
3 package, fee remission is not.

4 Now, we have fought through grassroots
5 organizing because the state has in the past
6 refused to bargain with us over this issue,
7 claiming it's a student issue and not an
8 employment issue. And as a result we have
9 won fee remission in various ways across the
10 state, but we don't yet have a total package
11 of fee elimination, fee abolition for our
12 members.

13 And that's key. Because members at
14 UAlbany are still paying fees, they are still
15 paying a large percentage of their income in
16 fees every year, and that is pushing them
17 from on the brink of poverty to poverty.
18 They are selling blood plasma, they are
19 getting food out of dumpsters -- it is very,
20 very bad.

21 And we are asking for a very small
22 amount of money in the broad scheme of the
23 SUNY budget, really -- \$10 million to
24 effectively get people out of poverty, allow

1 the people who do the backbone of teaching
2 and research in this system to actually not
3 have to worry about where their next meal is
4 going to come from so that they can teach and
5 do the research that's necessary to drive
6 New York's economy and to educate the next
7 generation.

8 So I urge you all to vote for
9 Senator Stavisky's bill that eliminates fees,
10 make sure it gets into the one-house budget
11 on both the Senate and the Assembly sides.
12 And, yeah, it's passed through the one-house
13 several times. We have faith that this time
14 that the Governor's side will support it. So
15 please get it in the one-house. Thank you.

16 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

17 MR. SAKO: Hi. Chairman Krueger and
18 honorable members of the Legislature, I am
19 Andrew Sako. I'm president of the Faculty
20 Federation of Erie Community College, and I
21 thank you for the opportunity to testify
22 today.

23 I would like to thank you for your
24 continued advocacy on behalf of higher

1 education. I truly believe that your work
2 saved community colleges by establishing a
3 floor and hold-harmless language to support a
4 myriad of programs at every community
5 college. And in particular, my home campus
6 of ECC has benefited by your actions, so
7 thank you.

8 The 2022-2023 enacted budget was a
9 welcome change from the austerity budgets of
10 the past. Unfortunately, one good year
11 simply cannot erase the years of damage of
12 cuts and flat budgets. We must reaffirm the
13 role public higher education plays in society
14 and stand up for a just, well-funded and
15 inclusive system.

16 NYSUT is calling for significant state
17 investment in New York's community colleges.
18 Without proper state investment, community
19 colleges are left with no good situations and
20 are either forced to raise tuition or
21 eliminate programs and student services,
22 neither of which are good for enrollment.

23 Access to quality higher education is
24 a critical component in the state's effort to

1 recruit and retain businesses and industries.
2 Our community colleges help fulfill that need
3 and provide affordable, high-quality
4 education.

5 Notwithstanding the Legislature's
6 commitment to the community colleges, the
7 state funding is not commensurate with the
8 State Education Law, which requires
9 40 percent operating costs be paid to these
10 campuses.

11 To make matters worse, declining
12 enrollments -- our funding continues to be
13 based on a totally inadequate FTE
14 reimbursement funding model. Also, there's a
15 a troubling fact: Seeing preemptive fiscal
16 belt-tightening by community college
17 administrators has impacted potential
18 enrollment at places like SUNY Erie.

19 Accordingly, we are asking the
20 Legislature to continue to hold harmless
21 base aid of 100 percent allocated --
22 allocated from the 2019-'20 year, or a
23 3250-per-FTE. This would give community
24 colleges an additional 23 million over the

1 proposed Executive Budget.

2 This is an investment. This
3 investment would guarantee that the
4 organizations are still recognizable and will
5 still help us attract students.

6 We also want to make sure students are
7 successful, and we want to bring programs
8 like the ASAP program that CUNY has. Every
9 tax dollar invested at SUNY and CUNY yields
10 even greater returns to the tax base.

11 Thank you.

12 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

13 Mr. Davis?

14 DR. DAVIS: Good afternoon, Senate
15 Chairpersons Krueger and Stavisky. Thank you
16 to all of the members of the Senate and
17 Assembly who have convened this meeting.

18 I am James Davis. I'm president of
19 the Professional Staff Congress. That's the
20 union that represents 30,000 faculty and
21 staff at the City University of New York.

22 I want to say that, first of all, the
23 PSC is very grateful for the support for CUNY
24 in last year's budget -- holding community

1 colleges harmless, funding the hiring of
2 full-time faculty, expanding mental health
3 services, supporting childcare centers,
4 expanding TAP to part-time and incarcerated
5 individuals. These all helped a university
6 that was reeling from a terrible pandemic,
7 and your determination to invest more in CUNY
8 is critical to reviving a budget that saw
9 public funding decline long before the
10 pandemic.

11 You have my written testimony, so I
12 just want to focus on three areas in the time
13 that I have today. One, how wise an
14 investment CUNY is. You probably know this
15 already, but I am going to say it anyway.

16 The second thing is what the PSC's
17 funding priorities are for this cycle.

18 And then last, if time permits, I want
19 to talk about the really acute issue in this
20 moment of the budget gaps that currently
21 exist and the university's response to those
22 budget gaps.

23 So first, on the point of being a wise
24 investment, CUNY is an economic engine for

1 New York State throughout good times and bad.
2 We know CUNY is a catalyst for the state
3 economy, and it should be understood as a
4 sound investment. In 2019 alone, CUNY
5 graduates earned \$57 billion in total and
6 paid 4.2 billion in state taxes, according to
7 the New York City Comptroller's Office
8 report.

9 And support for CUNY isn't just
10 fiscally responsible, it's widely embraced
11 across the political spectrum -- 95 percent
12 of Democratic and 79 percent of Republican
13 voters in New York State favor increasing
14 public higher education funding, according to
15 a recent Hart Research survey.

16 In terms of the PSC'S funding
17 priorities for this year, you have them in my
18 written testimony. We're really seeking
19 additional funding for full-time faculty
20 hires; \$82 million to cover mandatory cost
21 increases -- these aren't discretionary
22 points of spending, they're commitments that
23 the university has already made -- enhanced
24 academic advisement and mental health

1 counseling services; a community college
2 funding floor, as my colleague Andy just
3 mentioned; and also, we are seeking
4 additional support for graduate education.

5 I wanted to mention something about
6 the budget gaps that persist today. You
7 know, last year the Legislature and the
8 Governor came together to do an amazing
9 thing, which was to close the TAP gap, but
10 our systems are still reeling from a decade
11 in which the TAP gap increased tenfold.

12 And I'll wind up just by saying as a
13 result, right now our university
14 administration has demanded severe austerity
15 cuts from each of our colleges in order to
16 save an additional \$100 million over the
17 75 million from fiscal '23.

18 I'll be glad to follow up with any
19 questions that you may have, and thank you
20 again for the opportunity to present.

21 DR. KOWAL: Chairperson Krueger,
22 Chairperson Stavisky, thank you on behalf of
23 the 37,000 members of United University
24 Professions. I am honored to present to you

1 the testimony that I believe gets to the
2 points that are really urgent this year more
3 than ever.

4 My name's Dr. Fred Kowal, and as
5 president of UUP this is now my tenth year
6 testifying on the budget facing SUNY. And
7 really, I can't put into words the level of
8 appreciation my members have for each and
9 every one of you in the Higher Ed committees
10 and in the Ways and Means and Finance
11 committees because of your staunch support
12 for the work that my members do -- my
13 colleagues do.

14 This time around, I believe that given
15 the fact that our state has an \$8.6 billion
16 surplus, the resources are there to address
17 longstanding issues.

18 You have my written testimony. I want
19 to draw your attention to a couple of
20 important areas, and I'll reference that
21 testimony a couple of times.

22 First, as you know, over last year's
23 budget and this year's proposed budget we did
24 see the Governor propose some increases, and

1 they are necessary and they will bear fruit,
2 undoubtedly. However, if you look at
3 Figure 1 on page 3 of my testimony, you will
4 see that from state fiscal year 2008-2009 to
5 the current state fiscal year, when adjusted
6 for inflation, there has been a decline in
7 direct state support of over \$7.8 billion to
8 the state operation of campuses.

9 Moreover, if you just focus on
10 19 campuses in the SUNY system, 19 campuses,
11 they face a cumulative structural deficit of
12 \$160 million. This is what happens when you
13 have, as we had under the previous
14 gubernatorial administration, an aggressive
15 program to cut and strangle the institutions
16 of both SUNY and CUNY.

17 The steps that you took last year in
18 conjunction with the Executive were helpful,
19 but it is imperative this year that a
20 concerted effort be made to eliminate this
21 \$160 million budget gap that exists at 19 of
22 the campuses. In fact, if you look at those
23 campuses that -- where our members work, in
24 fact there's only six that are not facing a

1 deficit. So this is crucial.

2 Second, on the SUNY hospitals, once
3 again we need a commitment to take care of
4 long-term issues of underfunding. These are
5 hospitals that are the hospitals of first and
6 last resort in communities of color, where
7 they can get healthcare nowhere else, while
8 also these are teaching hospitals where the
9 next generation of a diverse set of
10 professionals are trained to fill the ranks
11 that we desperately need.

12 I thank you for the time I've been
13 allotted. I look forward to answering
14 questions on my testimony.

15 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you very
16 much.

17 Our first questioner will be
18 Chair Toby Stavisky, three minutes.

19 SENATOR STAVISKY: Real quick. I hope
20 you heard the testimony of the two
21 chancellors from SUNY and CUNY. Does anybody
22 have any reaction to what they testified to?

23 DR. KOWAL: My first reaction is I
24 welcome the fact that at various stages in

1 his testimony Chancellor King referenced the
2 need for resources that are absolutely
3 necessary.

4 Where I would disagree is his
5 endorsement of increased tuition. Not only
6 is it an issue of tuition, it is also an
7 issue of fees, both at the graduate and
8 undergraduate levels. And the reality is
9 that when you look at issues like enrollment,
10 tuition does dissuade students from
11 attending, but even more so, research shows
12 that a lack of public investment in public
13 universities curtails enrollment.

14 We've got the studies, I cited them in
15 my testimony. That needs to be addressed.

16 SENATOR STAVISKY: Anybody else?

17 DR. DAVIS: Senator, if I could add to
18 that. Thank you for the question.

19 Actually, I missed most of the
20 chancellor's testimony because we were
21 holding a contract rally right outside of his
22 office this morning.

23 (Laughter.)

24 DR. DAVIS: That also explains why my

1 voice is really hoarse. We went to CUNY
2 Central at 7:30 because our contract expires
3 tomorrow, and I know our colleagues are
4 negotiating their contract too.

5 So -- but I want to echo what Fred
6 said, which is, you know, at the PSC we
7 support additional public revenue for the
8 university, which for us means not additional
9 student tuition.

10 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

11 MR. SAKO: If I might just say
12 something on behalf of the community
13 colleges, the FTE funding that he mentioned,
14 they mentioned that they don't have a crystal
15 ball, and they don't want to really look at
16 it. And we need stable funding. And it
17 should not be based on enrollment. And I
18 think that's really killing us, and we are
19 dying on the vine.

20 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

21 MR. DOBBYN: And just to jump in,
22 there is a definite need for investment in
23 CUNY and SUNY.

24 I think there's also a need for some

1 oversight as to where that money is going and
2 how is it being spent. Because in many
3 instances you have situations where the wage
4 bill of the high-level administrators on
5 various campuses is larger than my
6 membership. And my membership do a lot of
7 the teaching and the research.

8 And to be perfectly honest, if a
9 number of associate deans disappeared
10 tomorrow, I don't think anybody would notice
11 except the people who work in their offices.
12 And that's an issue.

13 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

14 MR. McCARTNEY: I have one thing, in
15 how the chancellor addressed our 20-year
16 retirement. He fully supports it, and I just
17 want to thank you all for fully supporting it
18 also.

19 SENATOR LIU: Thank you.

20 Assemblymember Clark.

21 ASSEMBLYWOMAN CLARK: A quick
22 question.

23 So I want to go to the community
24 college a little bit. We've all had the same

1 conversation earlier with the chancellor
2 about the formula, needing stable funding.
3 The floor, maybe plus four, would be great.

4 What would the 20 percent holdback do,
5 and why is it not something that really would
6 work in this situation and --

7 MR. SAKO: Well, holding anything back
8 would really hurt our community colleges, in
9 my opinion. And I really believe that we
10 need the money, and we need to be able to
11 provide the services.

12 And the most important thing about the
13 services are the wraparound services for
14 advisement for our financial aid, and all of
15 those types of services that are being cut.
16 And those are the areas that we really need
17 to help them, so --

18 ASSEMBLYWOMAN CLARK: Yes, I would
19 agree. It doesn't make sense.

20 A question -- and a couple of you may
21 be able to answer it. But particularly in
22 our financially distressed campuses, the fact
23 that operating has really not been invested
24 in for decades. There's been a lot of

1 austerity around funding for SUNY and all of
2 our public colleges, CUNY.

3 If we don't fix that piece of it, if
4 we don't really put the dollars in it --
5 which we all, I think, agree that it can't be
6 done on the backs of our students and tuition
7 hikes on their families. If we don't do it,
8 though, what will continue to happen?

9 I mean, we are all fighting this
10 enrollment battle. Isn't it going to have
11 the exact opposite effect of what we're
12 trying to do? Because there won't be the
13 professors, there won't be the faculty, there
14 won't be the classrooms. You know, there
15 won't be the operating dollars to do the
16 things to provide the classes and the
17 services that the students need.

18 DR. KOWAL: Well, I would begin by
19 asserting, and I think it is more than an
20 assertion, and that is that funding a public
21 university system on the private money of
22 students is totally unsustainable. This is a
23 public university system, and by its nature
24 you need to have public investment.

1 What we see also is that where
2 investment doesn't occur, what we don't do as
3 institutions is reach large sections of
4 students that would address the enrollment
5 crisis. Fully 60 percent of African-American
6 students who graduate from high school in
7 this state do not attend institutions of
8 higher education. Among Hispanics, it's
9 35 percent.

10 So you're talking about huge swaths of
11 our population that don't even consider
12 higher education. And it is clear it's
13 because of the overall costs. And so there
14 is a large percentage of the population that
15 can get tapped into.

16 The only other point I would make --
17 when we talk about the distressed campuses, I
18 want to focus on Buffalo State. At Buffalo
19 State the enrollment of African-American
20 students is at 30 percent. That's well above
21 the statewide average for the enrollment at
22 institutions. We need to address the funding
23 there. It's one of the worst campuses in
24 terms of its financial situation because of

1 the austerity you talked about.

2 ASSEMBLYWOMAN CLARK: Thank you.

3 SENATOR LIU: Thank you very much.

4 I'll take my three minutes right now,
5 if you don't mind.

6 You know, I think we spoke a lot with
7 the chancellors earlier and they were very
8 positive, but they didn't really answer the
9 whole 60/40 traditional balance between SUNY
10 and CUNY.

11 Last year CUNY put forth a very good
12 proposal, the New Deal for CUNY. This year
13 both of you got together, and we're now
14 calling it the New Deal for Public Higher
15 Education; is that correct? So both UUP and
16 PSC are on board with maintaining a 60/40
17 balance? Parity, shall we call it?

18 DR. DAVIS: I understand that that's
19 been the historic practice. I happen to note
20 that in the Governor's Executive Budget that
21 even that historic practice has not been
22 observed, and so I would just urge the
23 committees to restore it.

24 To restore it, and also I think SUNY

1 deserves every bit and so -- not to cut the
2 SUNY budget in the process as well.

3 Thank you.

4 DR. KOWAL: Senator, I think that both
5 systems are so vitally important. And as you
6 know, they've been harmed terribly, I hope
7 not irreparably, by the austerity budgeting.
8 I think that where SUNY's costs skew the
9 overall ratio are in the teaching hospitals,
10 because we have to remember too that not only
11 are the hospitals treating patients and, in
12 the case of Downstate, overwhelmingly
13 Medicaid patients --

14 SENATOR LIU: Yeah, I mean, you know,
15 SUNY has some parts that CUNY doesn't have
16 commensurate responsibilities, and CUNY has
17 other needs that SUNY doesn't necessarily
18 have. So we're trying to maintain that
19 60/40.

20 And I guess, James, what you're saying
21 is that if SUNY's getting an additional
22 \$1 billion, you shouldn't take anything away
23 from SUNY; the state budget should just add
24 another, what, \$667 million for CUNY so that

1 it can maintain the 60/40 parity.

2 DR. DAVIS: Yes, for a start.

3 SENATOR LIU: That's all. Okay.

4 My last question, just for the two of
5 you, is that last year we put in a
6 substantial amount of additional money for
7 the purposes of both CUNY and SUNY hiring
8 additional full-time faculty, with a
9 preference towards adjuncts filling those
10 positions.

11 The chancellors seemed to have
12 indicated that they have done so and made a
13 lot of progress. Would you concur?

14 DR. DAVIS: I'll start on that one.
15 Thank you for the question.

16 I think that the attention to hire
17 current adjunct faculty was partially
18 successful, and I'm very proud of the work
19 that the union did to make sure that that
20 happened as well.

21 Part of the issue, though, is that we
22 lost so many full-time faculty over such a
23 stretch of time that there's a way in which
24 even that 53 million for each system, at

1 least as far as CUNY goes, is backfilling.
2 We lost almost 800 faculty, as I indicated in
3 my testimony, through attrition and
4 retirement over the span of approximately
5 four years through the pandemic.

6 So there's still a lot of work to be
7 done on that front.

8 SENATOR LIU: All right. Thank you.
9 Thank you very much.

10 Assemblywoman Seawright.

11 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SEAWRIGHT: Thank you.

12 I would like to address my questions
13 to State President Dobbyn of the CWA. Can
14 you elaborate on the pay-to-work system?
15 What are the average stipends? What kind of
16 work are union members doing? What's it like
17 across the different campuses? How many
18 people does it impact?

19 MR. DOBBYN: Yes. So the way the
20 system came about was that fees were an
21 insignificant part of your kind of
22 semi-tuition bill pretty much everywhere, and
23 then with the creation of the SUNY 2020 kind
24 of plan, you know, way back in the long, long

1 ago, you had no differential tuition but you
2 had fees that the university centers could
3 charge.

4 And initially this wasn't addressed in
5 the contract because it was a small amount of
6 money, we had like a little fee mitigation
7 fund, and that was fine.

8 The issue was that fees then began to
9 grow at a level that sometimes doubled or
10 even trebled inflation, and they began to
11 then be based on increases on a base rate
12 that was already very high. And so up until
13 about two years ago, before we won some of
14 our most recent victories, we had people
15 across the state, all 5,000 of our members,
16 paying something like \$2,000 a year.

17 Now we've won significant relief on
18 various campuses, but we now have a system
19 where basically on campuses like Albany,
20 everyone is paying. On campuses -- at
21 Binghamton, if you're a Ph.D. supported by
22 your program but not by a different office,
23 you are not paying. But if you're a Ph.D. of
24 pharmacology, you are paying, because

1 somebody in President Stenger's office
2 decided that pharmacology Ph.D.s weren't real
3 Ph.D.s.

4 Again, it's the issue of that --
5 because these are piecemeal solutions,
6 they've gotten very strange, and there's no
7 uniformity or equity to them.

8 In terms of our base stipends, it
9 ranges. But I would say generally \$20,000 is
10 a good sense of what we would get. Some
11 places it's much lower, some places it's a
12 bit higher, but that's a good sense.

13 So, yeah, on a base rate you're paying
14 about 10 percent. Sometimes you're paying
15 more than that because your stipend's less,
16 you're paying 15, sometimes even 20 percent.
17 And again, we are the -- sort of the
18 instructional and research backbone of the
19 SUNY system.

20 And again, these fees are really just
21 table stakes for making the SUNY system more
22 competitive at attracting graduate student
23 employees, which is key because the entire
24 bottom part of the academic labor pool from

1 post-docs to adjuncts to non-tenured
2 lecturers to graduate students, they've all
3 left. Because we all got the message. We
4 were all told something, which was get out,
5 we're not going to pay you anything. So
6 everybody got out after the pandemic.

7 And so now there's a shortage of
8 basically every kind of lower-level academic
9 worker around.

10 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SEAWRIGHT: Thank you.

11 SENATOR LIU: Thank you.

12 Senator Webb.

13 SENATOR WEBB: I couldn't tell if it
14 was on.

15 Good afternoon, thank you all for
16 being here. So, you know, we have heard
17 throughout the hearing today there's a lot of
18 issues around pay disparity. So I wanted to
19 open this question to Fred -- which, you
20 know, a long time UUP member -- but also to
21 other panelists. What else could we be doing
22 to provide more financial resources for
23 staff, also for graduate students? That's my
24 first question.

1 And then my second question is for
2 Mr. McCartney. With regards to -- I know at
3 Binghamton University they have a Campus
4 Citizen Review Board, and so one of my
5 questions is, what is university police doing
6 to foster better relations on college
7 campuses, especially with underrepresented
8 students and staff?

9 So those are my two questions.

10 DR. KOWAL: You should go first.

11 MR. MCCARTNEY: I can't answer for
12 Binghamton University specifically on that,
13 but I can get back to you.

14 But for what we're doing as a whole --
15 community policing -- we're getting involved
16 with all of the different clubs on campuses,
17 we're engaging with them. I can tell you,
18 where I work we do it all the time. And that
19 gives us a better understanding what the
20 students -- so they can come speak to us.

21 I mean, that's one main thing that we
22 do, community policing, and it's just a
23 major -- it's a major thing that the students
24 look forward to, because they have somebody

1 they can talk to. A lot of times when
2 students are in distress, they're looking for
3 somebody to speak with, and we are the first
4 people they see.

5 And when you open up a rapport with
6 them, when you're doing little Ice Cream with
7 a Cop, Coffee with a Cop, Donut with a Cop --
8 we do Gamings with Cops -- we schedule these
9 at all the SUNY campuses just so we have a
10 better rapport with all the students on
11 campus.

12 SENATOR WEBB: Does that also entail
13 that all of the campuses do have a campus
14 citizen review board, or is it just at
15 certain institutions?

16 MR. McCARTNEY: Binghamton is the
17 first one that I've heard of. Just last
18 year, I believe, they put that in place.

19 SENATOR WEBB: Okay. Thank you.

20 DR. KOWAL: Senator, in terms of pay
21 disparity and so forth, I think that where it
22 surfaces most is in the -- literally the
23 shortage of professional staff. We're seeing
24 it in IT across the state.

1 We are also obviously -- as the
2 Governor herself said in her State of the
3 State last year, that SUNY does not pay the
4 salaries to attract and retain especially
5 faculty and staff from underrepresented
6 communities of color.

7 Third, I would again pivot back to the
8 hospitals, where at Upstate they are spending
9 \$14 million a month to attract traveling
10 nurses. And the reality is if salaries were
11 offered to our members, we could grow the
12 personnel numbers there and then there
13 wouldn't be a shortage, while also training
14 the next generation. So it's
15 all-encompassing.

16 SENATOR LIU: Thank you.

17 Assemblymember Wallace.

18 ASSEMBLYWOMAN WALLACE: (Inaudible;
19 mic off.) Oh, much better. Okay.

20 So first of all, I just said thank you
21 for coming today, for your comments, and for
22 all you do to really raise the bar in terms
23 of making our higher education institutions
24 the envy of the nation. And, you know, our

1 job is to try to help you do that.

2 I want to focus on a comment that
3 Dr. Kowal made about the distressed campus
4 funds. You mentioned that there's a critical
5 need of 160 million for about 19 campuses.
6 And most of those campuses are in communities
7 that really rely upon those institutions --
8 I'm thinking places like Brockport, Fredonia,
9 Geneseo, you mentioned Buff State. And, you
10 know, they are really economic drivers as
11 well as really cultural institutions in those
12 communities. So that if they were to close,
13 it would really devastate some of those
14 communities, I believe.

15 And there's -- I mentioned earlier in
16 the hearing when the chancellor was speaking
17 that it really provides an opportunity to
18 bring cultural and economic diversity to
19 those communities that might not otherwise
20 see it. You said, you know, 30 percent of
21 individuals of color at Buff State and -- you
22 know, I know there is a lot more diversity in
23 the other campuses as well -- and it also
24 provides an opportunity to showcase those

1 communities to people from other parts of the
2 state who might never wind up going to --
3 being at Fredonia or Brockport or Geneseo.

4 I was wondering if you have ever seen
5 or are aware of any report or studies showing
6 what the economic impact of that 160 million
7 would be, hypothetically, if we were to
8 allocate that money.

9 DR. KOWAL: Thanks very much.

10 And I think the formula that is -- or
11 the multiplier effect that we're aware of is
12 that it's \$8 of economic activity generated
13 for every \$1 of public funding that goes into
14 SUNY institutions.

15 And imagine in a community, as you
16 said, like Brockport or Geneseo or Delhi or
17 my hometown of Cobleskill, where this is the
18 mill -- as it was said in the old days, we're
19 a mill town. Well, it's the SUNY campus,
20 that's what generates economic activity. It
21 builds a middle class of faculty and
22 professional staff who raise their families
23 there, pay taxes.

24 When we talk about economic

1 development, if you want very rapid economic
2 development and recovery from the past
3 economic declines and to cushion a potential
4 future one, invest in SUNY campuses. That's
5 how you create stronger economies upstate
6 literally instantly.

7 And so that's why it's worth it.
8 Really, there's the urgency that I feel about
9 this need.

10 ASSEMBLYWOMAN WALLACE: Thank you. I
11 share your comments.

12 And in the last 15 seconds I also want
13 to say, you know, I also share your concerns
14 about raising tuition, because we really
15 should be investing in public education, and
16 I think we really are shooting ourselves in
17 the foot when we do that because what we're
18 doing is we're losing students that we
19 otherwise would get and are really becoming
20 less and less competitive.

21 So thank you.

22 SENATOR LIU: Thank you.

23 Assemblymember Epstein.

24 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Thank you.

1 I just want to second what Monica just
2 said about tuition increases and losing
3 students.

4 Do any of you have data about the
5 students who are losing -- the students who
6 had started but then dropped out? Do we have
7 good data about why they left and -- because
8 they're trying to -- obviously we're seeing a
9 shrinking pool of students, and we want to
10 stop that. But no one's telling us why
11 they're leaving. Is it because they ran out
12 of TAP? Is it because they needed more
13 support and couldn't get it?

14 Like, what are you hearing from your
15 members about why we are losing?

16 DR. DAVIS: Assemblymember, let me
17 start. Thanks for the question.

18 What I have is mostly anecdotal, but I
19 just want to point to one interesting data
20 point, I think, which is, you know, the CUNY
21 enrollment has been in sharp decline during
22 the pandemic and was already in decline at
23 the community colleges prior to the pandemic.
24 But CUNY just published some data on the

1 Spring 2023 enrollment. And first of all,
2 the overall story is interesting, because
3 enrollment decline has slowed. It hasn't
4 begun to bounce back yet in positive terms,
5 except at the community colleges, where the
6 year-over-year head count from Spring 2022 to
7 Spring 2023 is actually up 1 percent.

8 So I think there is -- there may be
9 something there in terms of your question
10 about the demographics of the students who
11 are returning. I think senior colleges at
12 the CUNY system will follow, but that's only
13 a small piece, I think, of what you're after.

14 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: I think we're
15 trying to get to a nugget here. Like, we're
16 losing people. We heard the CUNY chancellor
17 say, Have we reached out to them? We picked
18 up 16,000 students who dropped out, and now
19 they're back in the system, but how do we
20 keep them in the system?

21 And the one effort that we dropped,
22 they picked up 16,000 students. If we did
23 larger efforts, I assume there are more
24 students, you know. And, I mean, I'm sure

1 our grad students are hearing why students
2 are leaving. And again, I'll just -- we need
3 to stop the fees, totally there. But I think
4 we're looking for this data so we can
5 actually do something. And I don't think
6 anyone's sharing that data to help us figure
7 out what to do.

8 MR. SAKO: If I might just jump in.
9 At the community colleges, I think it's the
10 wraparound services, it's the fact that the
11 financial aid and the other offices are
12 understaffed. And in many cases it may even
13 be not so much the marketing, but -- the new
14 students, they work, they have elder care,
15 they have children, they have jobs and in
16 some cases multiple jobs. They have
17 transportation issues. They have food
18 insecurity issues. These are all issues that
19 are not being addressed.

20 And we as faculty try to address those
21 with food banks and things of that nature at
22 our institution, but again, those are some of
23 the reasons why people are leaving. And also
24 the tuition goes up a little bit, it drives

1 some students away. And I just think, you
2 know, we're not doing them any service by
3 raising tuition.

4 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Any data you all
5 have, I would love to see.

6 MR. SAKO: Okay.

7 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Thank you.

8 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

9 Sorry, I have to cut you off.

10 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Thank you very
11 much.

12 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Assemblymember
13 Eachus.

14 ASSEMBLYMAN EACHUS: Thank you,
15 Chairwoman.

16 I don't know, you mentioned at least
17 one of you, if not a couple of you, were not
18 here earlier. I am a SUNY graduate, both in
19 a bachelor and master's degree, very proud of
20 that. I am also 40 years a high school
21 teacher. So education needs all the funding
22 it can get, without question.

23 I also want to thank all five of you
24 for being able to survive COVID. That was my

1 one shot at teaching in a college, and I
2 lasted one semester and I couldn't handle it
3 anymore, so --

4 (Laughter.)

5 ASSEMBLYMAN EACHUS: But I also was
6 for 12 years an Orange County legislator, so
7 just think county legislator. And we were
8 always told that there should be a one-third,
9 one-third, and one-third cut between the
10 state, the county, and the tuition. And I'm
11 certainly for that completely, but I question
12 about we need a set budget every year,
13 because I'm going to watch these SUNY and
14 CUNY schools just absolutely explode with
15 students. It's coming. Just hold your
16 breath, it's coming.

17 And once -- if that happens in a
18 particular year, aren't you going to be
19 short-circuited if you have a set budget
20 instead of basing it on the number of
21 students?

22 MR. SAKO: Well, if you look at the --
23 first of all, thank you for the question.

24 If you look at community colleges, we

1 have -- in the years that we had the highest
2 enrollment, the governor at the time cut us
3 twice. And that's what started a lot of this
4 stuff. So to say --

5 ASSEMBLYMAN EACHUS: Those times are
6 over.

7 MR. SAKO: I'm just saying, and I
8 always go back to that, that we got cut
9 twice, and that's what started a lot of this
10 dying on the vine.

11 You know, I think there has to be a
12 discussion of the FTE reimbursement and how
13 that affects colleges and community colleges,
14 and if they go above a certain level there
15 should be an accelerator. Obviously, we need
16 more sections, that type of thing, that needs
17 to occur.

18 But when you're talking about a flat
19 number of faculty, all the costs that go
20 along with that, I think you need to have a
21 certain amount of money like we would in our
22 own homes.

23 ASSEMBLYMAN EACHUS: I understand
24 that. And we just want to always be careful

1 about what we ask for, and make sure it's
2 going to work not just short-term but
3 long-term.

4 MR. SAKO: Yes.

5 ASSEMBLYMAN EACHUS: And also I'm very
6 conscientious about the whole business of the
7 loss of faculty and all that you had
8 mentioned. I'm one of those, I got out. I
9 retired, so I understand that.

10 But thank you.

11 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

12 Senator Pat Fahy.

13 (Laughter.)

14 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: How about
15 "Assemblymember."

16 (Laughter.)

17 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: It has a nice
18 ring to it.

19 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Thank you, thank
20 you, Senator.

21 (Laughter.)

22 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: And I apologize,
23 I had a call, a prearranged event, and had to
24 miss some of the testimony here.

1 But -- and I -- it looks like a number
2 of my questions were already answered. But I
3 do just want to pick up on -- and maybe on
4 the community college issue and the FTE, the
5 way it is based.

6 But if you could just elaborate a
7 little bit more on it, if you think we need
8 to look at formula changes there, or what
9 else we need to do to increase enrollment.
10 And I am glad to see that generally there's
11 small uptick, but we have a lot of work to
12 do. And as you know, we spoke a lot this
13 afternoon about what it's going to take at
14 the secondary level as well to make sure that
15 we turn this around.

16 But if you -- is the formula the
17 correct formula as well. Either of you is
18 fine, please.

19 MR. SAKO: The formula, I believe, is
20 antiquated, and I do believe that there needs
21 to be a funding level where we can continue
22 to grow. There also needs to be an
23 accelerator as the growth of enrollment needs
24 to occur.

1 I don't have a particular one in mind,
2 but what I'm saying is I do believe we need
3 to come up with stable funding for community
4 colleges and, had we been doing it at the
5 40 percent that open-enrollment campuses
6 require over the last 50 years, we might not
7 be in this situation.

8 And I'm not trying to throw anything
9 at all of you. I really respect everything
10 you've done for us in many, many years. But
11 the funding has not been there, and that's
12 really I think part of what has happened
13 here.

14 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Okay. I think I
15 got reduced on the minutes, so I'm going to
16 be very brief there.

17 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Everybody is
18 three minutes when you get past the
19 government --

20 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Got it. Thank
21 you.

22 Okay. I'll -- I talk fast, so that's
23 fine.

24 Anything else that we should be doing

1 with regard -- across the board with regard
2 to some of the distressed campuses and
3 turning around this enrollment issue? And
4 what else it might take in addition to the
5 funding to stabilize the distressed campuses.

6 And again, this enrollment issue that
7 I think is -- you know, the horizon doesn't
8 look good with losing so many secondary
9 students.

10 DR. KOWAL: Well, I think, you know,
11 research has shown that when funding
12 increases, enrollment increases. Not only
13 that, retention improves. You need those
14 wraparound services that Andy was speaking of
15 a little while ago. We see the same thing in
16 SUNY.

17 I saw it in my 25-plus years of
18 teaching, students who, you know, had real
19 capability of success and they do succeed in
20 the EOP program. Which unfortunately the
21 Governor once again has cut that budget,
22 which makes no sense. But where we see those
23 services in play, students succeed. And what
24 we are desperately in need of is to reach

1 those students in the communities of color
2 who have simply given up the entire concept
3 of going to college.

4 We can reach them, we need to get them
5 into school and to make them successful. And
6 I think until we do that, we are going to get
7 wrapped up in the idea that, well, it's
8 demographic and there's nothing we can do
9 about it. We need to get to those students
10 and bring them --

11 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Thank you.

12 Thank you, Chair.

13 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: You're welcome.

14 Thank you. All right, I believe the
15 Senate and the Assembly are closed for this
16 panel. I want to thank all of you gentlemen
17 for coming and testifying.

18 I'm going to call up the next panel.

19 DR. KOWAL: Thank you.

20 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you to
21 them, and I'm asking them to move out. And
22 I'm inviting the next panel up, which
23 includes the Association for Program
24 Administrators of CSTEP and STEP; the

1 organization On Point for College; Fostering
2 Youth Success Alliance; the Commission on
3 Independent Colleges and Universities; and
4 the Liberty Partnership Program.

5 Is everybody in their seats? And
6 everybody take your conversations outside so
7 that we can politely listen to the next
8 panel.

9 And why don't we start from my left,
10 your right, and introduce yourself and then
11 speak for three minutes. And we will just go
12 down that way. Okay? Thank you.

13 DR. ALBA: Okay. Good afternoon,
14 everyone. My name is Dr. Renaldo Alba,
15 representing the Association for Program
16 Administrators of CSTEP and STEP. Thank you
17 for having us, having me today, and for
18 reading my testimony in advance.

19 I would like to say hello on behalf of
20 the 121 CSTEP and STEP projects throughout
21 New York State, representing 20,000 students.
22 We have served for 37 years close to half a
23 million students in STEP and CSTEP.

24 And where are we? Fifty percent of

1 our programs are in public institutions,
2 43 percent of our programs are in independent
3 institutions, 17 percent of our STEP programs
4 are in community colleges, 23 percent of our
5 CSTEP projects are in community colleges.

6 Our programs are highly effective and
7 efficient, and the Legislature has recognized
8 this by investing in the growth of our
9 network, for which we are grateful.

10 While increased allocations have
11 allowed the network to expand by 21 new
12 projects -- 2,000 CSTEP students, 860 STEP
13 students -- over the two last years all
14 projects, all projects, remain hobbled by an
15 outdated and obsolete funding formula.

16 The current funding formula, devised
17 in 2014, has failed to keep up with the costs
18 to administer our programs in 2024. For
19 context, in 2014 -- in 2015 hourly wages in
20 New York State were \$8.75. Today it is
21 \$14.20 statewide; in New York City it's \$15,
22 for context.

23 There's simply less money to cover
24 programmatic expenses -- for example,

1 academic enrichment, instructional supplies.
2 With both chancellors speaking about STEP --
3 STEM professions, that's exactly what we
4 target. Technology supplies. Of course both
5 chancellors spoke about internships and
6 research and personnel expenses. The
7 pandemic has created an extra layer of need
8 for our middle school, secondary school
9 students and undergraduates, CSTEP and STEP
10 directors and staff, and their institutions.

11 These need to include food and housing
12 insecurity, a reliance on students to work to
13 offset expenses at home due to unemployment
14 in families, increased requests for
15 instructional and lab supplies, and increased
16 requests of technology supports to meet the
17 everyday demands of coursework.

18 Very simply, we need additional
19 funding. We're requesting, respectfully, an
20 increase of 20 percent. We understand that
21 inflation rates -- things have changed.
22 There are projections that you have in front
23 of you that were submitted to you late in the
24 fall.

1 We are the folks in the field. We are
2 the firefighters. We are the wraparound
3 services. I'm speaking from the trenches
4 here to tell you that those projections have
5 not taken a full accounting of how our
6 students are in crisis. This is not a crisis
7 of engagement, it's a student crisis that we
8 strive to meet.

9 Thank you.

10 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

11 And before you start, just a reminder
12 for everyone, on the nongovernmental panels,
13 which is where we are, everybody gets three
14 minutes maximum to ask questions and let the
15 panel answer. So it's a very almost
16 lightning-round model.

17 All of your full testimony is up
18 online for all of the members of the
19 committees to see and read and all of the
20 public to see and read. But whether you're a
21 chair or this is your very first budget
22 hearing, you all get three minutes.

23 Okay. And now I'll take it to the
24 next panelist.

1 (Inaudible.)

2 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: I'm sorry, what
3 happened?

4 ASSEMBLYMAN EACHUS: I think we're
5 having some trouble with the timer.

6 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Oh. Is the timer
7 not working? Only the one up there's
8 working? They can see it, we can't.

9 ASSEMBLYMAN EACHUS: Yes.

10 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Okay. As long as
11 they can see it, we're going to believe them.
12 What I can see -- because I have a little one
13 up here too.

14 All right, sorry to interrupt the
15 flow.

16 MR. ROWSER: So I can talk as much as
17 I want for three minutes?

18 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Please.

19 (Laughter.)

20 MR. ROWSER: My name is Samuel Rowser.
21 I'm executive director of On Point for
22 College.

23 Thank you for this opportunity to talk
24 with you about transforming lives and

1 communities by investing \$500,000 in
2 New York's future workforce.

3 Education is an effective pathway out
4 of poverty, and 90 percent of the students
5 who earn a bachelor's degree are lifted out
6 of poverty, according to a Pew Charitable
7 Trust study. Since On Point was founded in
8 1999, it's helped more than 3,000 students
9 graduate from college. These graduates now
10 earn more than they would had they only had a
11 high school diploma, and over the course of
12 their lifetime would earn over \$3 billion
13 which will be spent primarily in their
14 communities.

15 And we're working now in Onondaga,
16 Madison, Cayuga, Oswego, and Herkimer
17 counties, and also a partnership in Manhattan
18 and the Bronx.

19 On Point provides college access,
20 college success, and career services to help
21 adults 17 and up apply to and enroll in and
22 persist at college through graduation while
23 building skills in preprofessional
24 experiences to help launch their careers.

1 We help to level the playing field for
2 our students, low-income, first-generation
3 students who face many challenges on their
4 higher education journey. Without
5 assistance, these challenges will be turned
6 into barriers that leads them to stopping out
7 and never attending college.

8 On Point takes hundreds of students
9 each year to visit colleges throughout the
10 State of New York. On Point helps with the
11 financial aid process, provides some college
12 supplies to students who complete our college
13 orientation session, and provides
14 transportation to any college in New York
15 State using the corps of dedicated volunteers
16 or bus tickets.

17 On Point partners with local dentists
18 in our areas who do pro bono dental work. We
19 provide winter coats, eyeglasses. On Point
20 even partners with a local college and a
21 housing agency so that our students that are
22 at risk of being homeless or did have to face
23 homelessness have a safe place to stay during
24 the summer and winter breaks when the dorms

1 close.

2 We help students pay for textbooks,
3 summer courses, outstanding bills that
4 prevent them from reenrolling, housing
5 deposits and fees when financial aid is
6 unavailable or has run out.

7 An investment in On Point is also an
8 investment in New York's higher education
9 institutions. Seventy percent of our
10 students, more than 2,400 enrolled students,
11 are serving this semester attending public
12 colleges across New York State. These
13 students contribute over 23 million in
14 tuition fees, room and board at community
15 colleges.

16 Our On Point students persist at a
17 rate of 74.3 percent -- that's 25 percent
18 more than the first generation students
19 persist at most of the community colleges our
20 students attend. So in addition to students
21 who have never been able to access college
22 without On Point, 600 more students would
23 have stopped out and had college debt and not
24 be contributing over \$5 million in tuition

1 fees and room and board to the community
2 colleges that they attend.

3 Our students bring their TAP, their
4 Pell awards, and their last-dollar grants to
5 these colleges and to these campuses. If
6 these students had not had On Point support,
7 they would not have attempted to go to
8 college at all.

9 These funds flow to campuses across
10 New York State because of On Point's help.
11 These students go and remain in college. Keep
12 it On Point.

13 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you. Thank
14 you very much.

15 Next?

16 MS. BRABHAM: Good afternoon. My name
17 is Lola Brabham, and I serve as the president
18 of the Commission on Independent Colleges and
19 Universities.

20 CICU represents more than 100 private
21 nonprofit colleges and universities across
22 New York, and nearly 500,000 students -- more
23 than half of which are New Yorkers. Our
24 members award 58 percent of education

1 degrees, 61 percent of STEM degrees, and
2 two-thirds of nursing degrees. These
3 graduates are needed by New York's businesses
4 and other entities to remain competitive.

5 Recently, the New York State Office of
6 Strategic Workforce Development awarded more
7 than \$6 million in grants to eight projects
8 across the state to support employer-driven
9 high-skilled workforce training programs.
10 Two of our schools, Cornell and RIT, were
11 recipients of that grant.

12 The future of New York is in the hands
13 of today's college students, whether they
14 attend a public or a private college. They
15 are the next generation of entrepreneurs,
16 healthcare workers, and educators. But they
17 need your help to realize their full
18 potential.

19 The most effective way to help
20 students is to invest in student aid.
21 Two-thirds of students at CICU member
22 colleges are from families that earn less
23 than \$125,000 annually. Of the nearly 50,000
24 independent sector students receiving awards

1 through the Tuition Assistance Program, half
2 have annual family incomes of under \$20,000.

3 While I represent the independent
4 sector, I want to emphasize that the public
5 and private higher education sectors form an
6 ecosystem that together and only together
7 will be able to educate and develop the
8 skilled workforce that New York State needs.
9 For that reason, CICU members, SUNY and CUNY
10 recently united to support legislation which
11 we hope will be enacted to address the urgent
12 nursing shortage. As you know, New York has
13 a serious healthcare workforce crisis.
14 Colleges and universities both public and
15 private must play a significant role in
16 addressing this challenge.

17 We're working closely with the State
18 Education Department to develop a pathway to
19 utilize simulation education to alleviate the
20 bottleneck created by a lack of clinical
21 placements. It's imperative that the state
22 bolster student aid and increase support for
23 proven education programs that benefit
24 New York's college students.

1 So we're asking the Legislature to
2 provide that support by expanding the Tuition
3 Assistance Program, investing in Bundy Aid,
4 supporting Opportunity Programs and student
5 well-being, and investing in funding for
6 HECAP and research and development -- the
7 details all of which are in my written
8 testimony.

9 New York State should continue to
10 partner with colleges to support the local
11 economies that rely on them. This includes
12 support for higher education capital which
13 spurs investments and creates jobs in
14 communities across the state. So we're
15 asking you to restore the \$30 million that
16 was left out of the state budget for higher
17 education capital.

18 Lastly, New York can solidify its
19 position as a national leader in higher
20 education and R&D by expanding partnerships
21 with the world-class universities. And
22 again, there are details about how we can
23 best do that in my written testimony.

24 Colleges and universities need the

1 state's support to prepare the next
2 generation of leaders, and we look forward to
3 working with you in partnership on behalf of
4 New York's college students.

5 Thank you.

6 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

7 Next?

8 MS. ALTMAN: Good afternoon. My name
9 is Liz Altman, and I'm honored to be here
10 today in my position as the president of the
11 Friends of the New York State Liberty
12 Partnership Programs, Inc.

13 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Bring the mic
14 closer.

15 MS. ALTMAN: Okay.

16 Liberty is celebrating its 35th
17 anniversary this year as New York State's
18 only state-funded dropout prevention program.

19 We provide high-quality,
20 academic-based comprehensive programming,
21 services such as social/emotional learning,
22 experiential learning, academic remediation,
23 college prep, career and workforce readiness
24 and mental health services to over

1 15,000 marginalized and at-risk youth across
2 the state. Last year LPP helped to graduate
3 91 percent of our senior cohort with a less
4 than 1 percent dropout rate.

5 The first ask is that you consider
6 moving the per-pupil cap proposed by the
7 Board of Regents and supported by the
8 Governor. With the removal of this fixed
9 cap, it would enable us to provide services
10 that are weighted and more equitable to the
11 diverse populations that we serve.

12 The second ask, respectfully, if you
13 will consider a 20 percent increase in
14 funding. And we'd like to thank you for the
15 previous increase in funding. This year it
16 enabled us to grow from 46 to 51 programs and
17 therefore essentially serving more students
18 across the state.

19 Liberty has been administering
20 social/emotional assessments for over
21 seven years to each and every single one of
22 our students. History and more recently the
23 pandemic have reminded us that we need to
24 refine programming and curriculum to meet our

1 students' needs.

2 We use the ASCA results to identify
3 the needs of our students to develop and
4 implement responsive and effective
5 programming. With the additional monies we
6 can continue to ensure that Liberty is
7 hiring, training, and retaining qualified
8 individuals to provide these mental health
9 services.

10 I feel that Liberty is in a unique
11 position to support the Governor's mental
12 health initiatives, specifically as it
13 relates to providing mental health services
14 to the K-12 level. As I understand it, there
15 currently is no state license that permits
16 clinicians like myself to push into the K-12
17 setting to provide services. So Liberty
18 provides a really unique position for us to
19 partner with LEAs and through the addition of
20 MLAs to provide these services.

21 And lastly, I just want to bring
22 awareness to the fact that we're chronically
23 experiencing late access to our funding,
24 often in the second fiscal year. And this

1 year it looks like it's going to be no
2 earlier than our third fiscal quarter. This
3 jeopardizes the continuity of necessary and
4 effective services to our at-risk youth. And
5 I'm hopeful that by expressing this concern,
6 it will provide an opportunity for further
7 inquiry, perhaps by way of a task force or
8 something similar, with the goal of
9 addressing this concern.

10 And I thank you for your time today.

11 MS. NESBETH: Hi.

12 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: So --

13 MS. NESBETH: Is this on?

14 Okay. My name is Deidra Nesbeth, and
15 I'm here today on behalf of the Fostering
16 Youth Success Alliance. We'd like to thank
17 the chairs as well as the rest of the members
18 of the committees for the opportunity to
19 testify here today.

20 This testimony seeks to address
21 funding for the Foster Youth College Success
22 Initiative, or FYCSI. FYCSI was first
23 established in the 2015-2016 budget and aims
24 to bridge the gap from foster care to college

1 success.

2 So far the initiative has been able to
3 serve over 2,000 students, and currently
4 there are close to a thousand students who
5 are on the path to college success,
6 participating in FYCSI across more than
7 100 public and private colleges and
8 universities throughout New York State.

9 While we appreciate that Governor
10 Hochul's Executive Budget proposal included
11 \$7.92 million in funding for FYCSI, there's
12 still more to be done. We ask that the
13 Legislature support an additional
14 \$2.08 million in funding, for a total of
15 \$10 million in funding for the Foster Youth
16 College Success Initiative.

17 As more students with a foster-care
18 background become aware of and utilize FYCSI,
19 it's essential we ensure the support they
20 need to make it both to and through college
21 is available to them. FYCSI resources allow
22 young people to cover expenses and access
23 support such as tuition, housing and
24 transportation, books, medical and personal

1 expenses.

2 Knowing that the support is available
3 allows young people with a foster-care
4 background to view higher education as an
5 accessible pathway. One youth advocate,
6 currently a senior at SUNY Purchase, stated
7 that "When I learned that I could get funding
8 to pay for college, it gave me the motivation
9 to expand my horizons. I pursued a degree in
10 psychology. With resources such as FYCSI, I
11 can now be one of the people to diversify the
12 field of psychology."

13 These resources make the difference
14 between young people having to consistently
15 think about survival versus thinking about
16 thriving. As many as 25 percent of youth
17 with a foster-care background are thinking
18 about the need of where they will live,
19 making it very difficult to consider things
20 such as where will I go to school.

21 In addition to making sure there's an
22 investment of funds, it's also important that
23 FYCSI funds be easily accessible for youth to
24 access. Through the Making College Success

1 working group that FYCSI convenes every month
2 with partners from HESC, SED, OCFS, ACS, SUNY
3 and CUNY, the TAP application now allows for
4 young people to more readily acknowledge that
5 they are young people with foster-care
6 backgrounds.

7 In this first year of the full
8 implementation, 26 percent of students found
9 eligible for FYCSI support were new students.
10 FYSA anticipates that this will expand
11 further as we work alongside both our state
12 partners and youth advocates to raise
13 awareness of the initiative.

14 Again, to accommodate this increase,
15 we ask that the Legislature support an
16 additional \$2.08 million, for a total of
17 \$10 million in the FYCSI initiative.

18 By championing FYCSI, the state is
19 ensuring that all foster youth who come into
20 the care of the state and want to attend
21 college are able to and, further, are able to
22 further their education and become
23 independent and make their unique impact on
24 society.

1 Thank you.

2 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

3 So the -- at least we have one clock,
4 members, that's working. So just keep an eye
5 on it.

6 We go to Assemblywoman Fahy, three
7 minutes.

8 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Thank you.
9 Thanks to each of you for your testimony.

10 And I know the clock is against us
11 here, so I'm just going to try to get in a
12 couple of questions. And I want to start
13 with our Commission on Independent Colleges
14 and Universities, to President Brabham.

15 If enrollment -- we heard a lot today,
16 we talked a lot today with SUNY and CUNY and
17 others about enrollment, including the
18 outyears, with the numbers down across the
19 board, including in secondary schools. Can
20 you give us a sense what you're seeing at the
21 independent colleges and universities? And
22 are there promising practices that we all
23 need to be aware of?

24 And then in addition to enrollment,

1 you mentioned well-being, well-being
2 programs, and I wanted to hear more if
3 there's -- given some of the mental health
4 concerns that we're seeing among our students
5 and among so many post-COVID.

6 So enrollment and well-being, or
7 mental health programs that are promising
8 practices.

9 MS. BRABHAM: Sure. Thank you for
10 that question.

11 I think we know and we've heard a lot
12 today about how enrollment and reductions in
13 enrollment has been a problem across the
14 higher education system. And, you know,
15 quite frankly, in our sector we first started
16 to see that problem -- that it kind of
17 coincided with the introduction of the
18 Excelsior Scholarship, where we immediately
19 saw specifically in our schools that serve
20 primarily New York students a 5 percent
21 reduction.

22 Going forward, you know, with the
23 pandemic, we saw yet more problems with
24 enrollment. Now that, starting as a sector,

1 we're starting to bounce back. It's coming
2 back slowly. I think we're down in
3 enrollment maybe a net 3 percent decline in
4 enrollment. But we're seeing that enrollment
5 start to tick up again, primarily in our
6 larger schools with international reputations
7 where it's a little bit easier for them.

8 Our regional schools that serve
9 primarily New York students are still
10 struggling with that and looking for ways to
11 recruit students onto campus and to retain
12 the students that are there. And the best
13 way to do that, you know -- what I -- every
14 year when I come here I say the best way to
15 do that is by providing adequate student aid.

16 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Thank you.

17 With our few seconds left here, just a
18 very quick question with the Liberty
19 Partnership Program as well as our Fostering
20 Youth Success Alliance. Any comparison data,
21 especially with the foster care program,
22 which as you mentioned is quite new, in the
23 last eight years or so -- any comparison data
24 to show if it's truly working and has made a

1 difference? It's great that we're serving
2 1,000 students currently.

3 MS. BRABHAM: We don't yet have
4 comparison data, but we are working with
5 SUNY, CUNY and SED, speaking with them about
6 how we can access information so we can make
7 those available.

8 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Thank you. Thank
9 you, Chair.

10 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.
11 Senate?

12 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.
13 Senator Toby Stavisky.

14 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.
15 Dr. Brabham, let me ask you a quick
16 question. First of all, thank you for your
17 help with the simulation bill for the nurses,
18 to improve the number of nurses.

19 MS. BRABHAM: You're very welcome,
20 Senator.

21 SENATOR STAVISKY: The issue that was
22 just brought up of declining enrollment, I
23 know that you've had some closures of some of
24 the independent colleges. How is that

1 progressing? Or let's hope it's not.

2 MS. BRABHAM: Let's hope it's not
3 progressing.

4 SENATOR STAVISKY: Let's hope it's
5 not. But how are you meeting the challenge?

6 MS. BRABHAM: Yeah, it's a challenge.
7 And, you know, most recently we heard the
8 announcement about Cazenovia, you know, that
9 is scheduled to close.

10 SENATOR STAVISKY: Yeah.

11 MS. BRABHAM: You know, when we have
12 that situation, the college will put a
13 teach-out agreement in place to help students
14 identify either other schools that they may
15 want to transfer or how they might want to
16 handle those transfer arrangements.

17 It's -- to my knowledge, Cazenovia has
18 I think 19 agreements in place right now
19 where they're working with their students to
20 enable those -- to facilitate those
21 transfers.

22 SENATOR STAVISKY: Yeah, they had a
23 long history, and it was really unfortunate
24 to see any college go --

1 MS. BRABHAM: Absolutely.

2 SENATOR STAVISKY: -- to close.

3 One last question. Student debt. Do
4 you find that students are graduating with
5 increasing debt? Or are you finding ways to
6 reduce the debt of students?

7 MS. BRABHAM: So I will speak for our
8 sector and say that we're doing everything we
9 can do to hold down student debt. In fact,
10 we provide -- our schools provide 89 percent
11 of all of the financial assistance, student
12 aid that our students get. Another 7 percent
13 is provided by the federal government, and
14 4 percent comes from state aid. So we're
15 doing everything that we can. Again, it
16 comes down to student aid and making sure we
17 have enough of it.

18 I would say to your point
19 specifically, though, about student debt --
20 the students that are most at risk for not
21 being able to pay their student loans are
22 students who do not graduate and can't find
23 jobs and don't have the money to pay back
24 their debt.

1 The other part of it are students that
2 are seeking to pursue graduate study where
3 there's not enough student aid available for
4 them to do that, so they're borrowing more.

5 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

6 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Assembly.

7 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We go to
8 Assemblywoman Clark, three minutes.

9 ASSEMBLYWOMAN CLARK: Hello. Thank
10 you all for testifying here today and
11 bringing your expertise.

12 We've had a long day talking a lot
13 about college affordability, doing things
14 that we can do increase enrollment, but also
15 why we're losing students, why we're losing
16 those who have enrolled and leave or apply
17 and never make it to our campuses for a
18 variety of reasons.

19 And so through all the services that
20 you guys provide, I feel like we should be
21 doubling down on what you do. You are
22 critical at a moment when we know we're
23 losing students in college. You offer all
24 the services we know our students need and at

1 the same time we know our workforce needs
2 them to graduate.

3 So I first just want to say thank you.
4 And you do have a lot of support in our
5 Legislature to really, I think at this
6 critical moment, be doubling down on what you
7 do.

8 I also really am thankful for the
9 support of increasing TAP eligibility -- we
10 did hear about that today -- and
11 understanding that we haven't really raised
12 income threshold or minimum on it in decades,
13 and that really hurts definitely our
14 lower-middle-class, middle-class families who
15 have not had access to that as tuition
16 relief.

17 The one thing I want to touch on --
18 and there may not be answers today, maybe
19 these are conversations we have to have --
20 you know, over the last couple of years we've
21 been hearing a lot more about food insecurity
22 on campuses. And we think that's sort of
23 reaching a level where many of our college
24 campuses are partnering with food cupboards

1 and various organizations to help them. But
2 what we're now hearing more than ever is the
3 housing crisis.

4 And I'm wondering if there are
5 given -- working with the foster
6 population -- you know, the youth coming out
7 of foster care, housing is a big issue -- but
8 I'm guessing you're all seeing it now. It's
9 not just about staying in dorms, because so
10 many people can't afford to do that. And if
11 they do stay in dorms, it's then that issue
12 of breaks and what are we doing -- and really
13 looking for some unique ways that we can
14 support, as a state legislature, different
15 kinds of ideas to support those kinds of
16 students.

17 We have kids -- we have more students
18 at our community college that are living in
19 shelters now than we've ever had before. So
20 maybe there are unique ways that we can start
21 looking at housing to address this, and I
22 just wanted to know if any of you have
23 thoughts to start that conversation, but also
24 willing to follow up with all of you.

1 DR. ALBA: Some thoughts that what
2 we've seen across our network are what would
3 be helpful at our institutions, just resource
4 centers.

5 So there are food pantries, but
6 resource centers as well, connecting students
7 that are in need of public assistance -- SNAP
8 benefits, Section 8 housing. Those are
9 benefits that are available widely. And
10 making response teams, mobile teams
11 available, or a call center that can help
12 resolve a lot of that, alleviate a lot of the
13 issues.

14 What we're seeing with the pandemic,
15 people are now moving back home and are
16 taking on additional boarders in their home,
17 and that creates a stress that's fairly
18 unique, and we're seeing it in our counseling
19 sessions at school.

20 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

21 Senate?

22 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

23 Senator Gounardes.

24 SENATOR GOUNARDES: There we go.

1 Thank you, Senator Krueger. Good
2 afternoon, everyone.

3 I have questions for CICU. As we
4 know, the Supreme Court has heard arguments
5 on two of the affirmative action cases,
6 Students for Fair Admissions. I think many
7 people expect that the Supreme Court will
8 eliminate the ability to consider race as a
9 diverse factor in college admissions.

10 So I'm curious, what are your member
11 institutions doing to plan for creating a
12 diverse student body without the ability to
13 consider race in their admissions practices?

14 MS. BRABHAM: I would answer that by
15 saying that our schools, even before this
16 issue came up, before the Supreme Court, are
17 always working to create a diverse and
18 inclusive atmosphere.

19 But to the second point of your
20 question, you know, race is never used as a
21 primary factor for recruitment or for
22 admission to any of our schools. So I don't
23 know that they would be doing anything
24 differently in light of whatever the decision

1 is that the Supreme Court makes.

2 SENATOR GOUNARDES: Sure.

3 My concern is that we have some of the
4 most exclusive institutions of higher
5 education here in the state, private
6 institutions of higher education, many of
7 which get state dollars to support research
8 grants and tuition assistance and a whole
9 bunch of other things. They employ really
10 exclusionary admission practices like legacy
11 admissions, which is basically affirmative
12 action for privileged students. They use a
13 scary level of early decision admissions
14 which favors students who are -- come from
15 wealthier backgrounds, who can afford to make
16 commitments to schools without knowing their
17 financial aid package, and that serves to
18 self-select those who might consider a
19 college degree or certain institutions to
20 pursue a college degree.

21 And so in losing the ability to
22 consider race as any factor through
23 affirmative action, I'm very concerned that
24 we're going to lose diversity in our private

1 institution campuses here in New York State
2 while they continue to use legacy admissions
3 and early decision practices which, by their
4 very definition, are exclusionary to the most
5 privileged and wealthy students in our state.

6 So I would love to follow up on that
7 conversation. If your schools are not
8 thinking about that, I think they should be
9 starting to think about it, because this is a
10 national conversation that we need to start
11 having at this point.

12 MS. BRABHAM: Really quickly, I just
13 want to respond and say that our schools do
14 not use -- again, legacy admission would
15 never be a primary factor for college
16 entrance.

17 And also I'd say that it's not used to
18 keep people out, it's used to bring people
19 in. Because primarily, you know, our
20 regional schools use that to say, hey, if you
21 make the grades and you meet the criteria for
22 entrance to the school and you had a parent
23 or relative who has attended here, you know,
24 we welcome you. So I don't believe that it's

1 used as a tool to keep people out.

2 But I understand the spirit of your
3 comments. And I understand, you know, this
4 complex issue has so many different layers
5 that I would like to circle back and talk to
6 you about this. I've spoken with Assemblyman
7 Epstein about this, and I would love to
8 continue the conversation.

9 SENATOR GOUNARDES: Thank you.

10 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: And now we go
11 to Assemblyman Epstein.

12 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Andrew, thank
13 you so much.

14 (Laughter.)

15 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: So I would love
16 to keep talking about legacy admission. You
17 know, I think it's got historical
18 discrimination or racism packed right in
19 there, so I think we should end it, to be
20 honest. And I hope we can get on the same
21 page around ending it, because I don't think
22 it serves the students of New York well.

23 MS. BRABHAM: Yeah, so one comment
24 that I will make about that -- and, again,

1 part of what makes this so complex is that,
2 you know, obviously our schools will comply
3 with what the Legislature decides, right?
4 Gladly.

5 But I do want to say that taking away
6 early decision, for example, from New York,
7 but the surrounding states still have early
8 decision, you're putting New York State and
9 its colleges at a disadvantage because there
10 are students that seek early decision that
11 will be looking outside of New York.

12 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: So Andrew's bill
13 has legacy and early, mine just has legacy.
14 So let me distinguish --

15 MS. BRABHAM: Well, I'm speaking on
16 the whole thing.

17 (Laughter.)

18 MS. BRABHAM: I'm capturing it all.

19 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Okay.

20 But I want to talk about how we're
21 losing people. Because we keep talking about
22 the enrollment numbers going down, and I
23 think we're not really having good data. I
24 would love to get good data from everyone

1 here to figure out why we're losing students
2 who -- are we losing students because they
3 run out of TAP?

4 Are they -- are we losing -- at what
5 percentage are we losing because they run out
6 of TAP? What are we losing because they need
7 more support that they're not getting? Who
8 are we losing for what reason, and how do we
9 recapture those students?

10 Because I think that's part of what --
11 I think that's -- we're missing part of the
12 conversation. And I'd love to hear from
13 folks -- and I know we only have a minute and
14 a half, but I would love to hear from folks
15 now and love to hear from folks later about
16 what we can do to figure out who we're
17 losing, why we're losing them, and how we get
18 them back into finishing college.

19 MR. ROWSER: I will say really
20 quickly, you know, with On Point it's
21 providing those wraparound services,
22 providing the services the students need that
23 we aren't generally looking at.

24 When you're talking about

1 housing-challenged students -- you know, I
2 come home over the winter break and I really
3 don't have any place to stay, and I'm staying
4 someplace and I don't have transportation to
5 get back to school -- I mean, some of those
6 things are part of the problems students
7 have. On campus, I can't buy all my books, I
8 have no one to go to to help me get those
9 books.

10 So those wraparound support services,
11 if you have them there, keep them there. And
12 that's part of what we try to do is make sure
13 more students can stay on campus that are
14 there.

15 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: I would love to
16 get that data about, like, who are we -- like
17 what -- who we're getting that, and if we got
18 more of these wraparound services, who could
19 we keep on all our campuses.

20 DR. ALBA: I've been hearing your
21 questions throughout the day, and I really
22 appreciate them.

23 You know, I have a simple answer:
24 Invest in the precollege programs that you

1 have in New York State.

2 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Right.

3 DR. ALBA: LPP, the STEP programs.

4 Those are programs where those students are
5 nurtured. And we talked about a lack of
6 student engagement. We provide communities
7 for our students at our institutions. STEP
8 programs have arrangements, for the most
9 part, where their CSTEP counterparts are
10 preparing to receive those students. It's a
11 pipeline of 7 through 16.

12 Invest in the precollege student
13 programs that are working. LPP has a
14 tremendous track record. STEP has a
15 tremendous track record. STEP graduates,
16 80 percent of them pursue professional degree
17 programs of study in college in STEM and
18 health-licensed fields.

19 They get handed over -- an On Point
20 student gets handed over to a CSTEP program,
21 into an HEOP or a EOP program, or there's a
22 Fostering Youth program that's able to come
23 on campus and support it. We retain our
24 students. We recruit our students.

1 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

2 MR. ROWSER: The quick answer to your
3 question, invest in STEP and CSTEP, and
4 invest in LPP and your Fostering Youth
5 programs.

6 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

7 To the Senate?

8 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

9 Senator Murray.

10 SENATOR MURRAY: Thank you,
11 Chairwoman.

12 So the TAP issue is one of the issues
13 I was going to bring up, so I'll just bounce
14 this idea off you. I'm from Long Island,
15 where the cost of living is a bit higher.
16 What would you think of -- we haven't changed
17 the TAP threshold in forever. And 80,000 per
18 household is ridiculous; on Long Island it's
19 really ridiculous.

20 What would you think of tying it to
21 either the federal poverty level -- similar
22 to what we're talking about with childcare --
23 or tying it to the regional median income or
24 something like this, to raise the threshold

1 up? What -- I mean, is there a better way to
2 do this? Anyone.

3 MS. BRABHAM: Yes. The better way is
4 to adopt our proposal that we put on the
5 table, which is to raise the income limit to
6 \$110,000. And we know that right off the top
7 we will capture another 24,000 New York
8 students that would be eligible for the
9 program.

10 SENATOR MURRAY: Right. I'm wondering
11 why we don't just take it to 125 and match
12 Excelsior. But -- that would make a little
13 more sense, I think.

14 But moving on to -- you mentioned
15 things like pre-college programs. BOCES --
16 we've been talking about that a lot, and I've
17 been preaching about the fallacy that it's an
18 either-or situation regarding go to BOCES or
19 go to college.

20 Are you seeing any kind of an increase
21 now since we're putting a little more
22 attention to BOCES and CTE? Are you seeing
23 more of an increase of BOCES or CTE students
24 enrolling in college or going on to college?

1 DR. ALBA: We've observed --

2 No, you first.

3 MR. ROWSER: We work in a lot of the
4 upstate -- in a lot of the rural -- we're in
5 Oswego County, Cayuga County, and many of
6 those students are in the BOCES program. And
7 they're getting those college credits now
8 while they're in the BOCES program, and
9 they're completing that program and going on
10 to college.

11 So it is a combination of -- that's
12 happening now.

13 DR. ALBA: To your question, should it
14 be mutually exclusive, it's not an either/or.
15 Clearly students that are inspired in BOCES
16 go to college and continue their programs of
17 study.

18 I had a student that was a BOCES
19 student, came from Yorktown, and he graduated
20 from Columbia Medical School.

21 SENATOR MURRAY: Wow.

22 DR. ALBA: So, you know, it's not an
23 either/or. So the narrative on that I think
24 needs to be examined a bit more. Those

1 students go to college and they're supported
2 at college by programs like ours.

3 SENATOR MURRAY: With one minute left,
4 any suggestions on how we can get rid of that
5 fallacy?

6 I know we're making steps and we're
7 making progress, but anything we can do
8 better to remove that -- again, that fallacy
9 that it has to be an either/or?

10 DR. ALBA: I think that just comes out
11 into a local issue, right? I know
12 superintendents supervise BOCES, and that's
13 the message that's created in those home
14 communities. I think that's exactly -- a lot
15 of it is local. Along with politics, right?

16 SENATOR MURRAY: And success stories
17 like you just said, those are great.

18 DR. ALBA: Absolutely.

19 SENATOR MURRAY: So thank you very
20 much. Keep up the great work.

21 Thank you.

22 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Assembly.

23 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We go to
24 Assemblywoman Hyndman.

1 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Thank you,
2 Chair Weinstein.

3 So having run a CSTEP and STEP
4 program, it's really good to see the students
5 that are now doctors around this country. So
6 I understand the value and hope the Assembly
7 can advocate to get that money back.

8 And, Mr. Rowser, I hope you get that
9 \$500,000, because as long as I've been on
10 Higher Ed, you're one of the few groups that
11 show up to ask for your money every year. So
12 thank you for doing that.

13 MR. ROWSER: Just trying to keep it
14 On Point.

15 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: On Point.
16 Right.

17 (Laughter.)

18 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Ms. Brabham,
19 so this conversation has come up quite a bit
20 today about the turnaround time for program
21 approvals. Does your sector of higher ed --
22 what has your experience been with the
23 turnaround time of SED approvals for
24 programs?

1 MS. BRABHAM: I heard that testimony
2 earlier today, and I think SED said that it
3 takes an average of 22 days. That's not been
4 our experience.

5 You know, we have many schools who
6 come to us and ask for our assistance and ask
7 for us to intervene on their behalf in
8 talking to SED and trying to figure out where
9 some of the issues are. So I will just say
10 that that has not been our experience. We've
11 had campuses that wait anywhere from several
12 months to several years for approvals.

13 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Okay. And
14 when we had the president of HESC, he talked
15 about the Enhanced Tuition Assistance Program
16 and that the numbers were going down. But
17 for the private colleges and universities,
18 are they still trying to get Bundy Aid? Is
19 it a problem? Because I know sometimes they
20 get discouraged and they don't even get the
21 aid.

22 I hope we can change the name this
23 year from Bundy Aid, Chair.

24 (Laughter.)

1 MS. BRABHAM: Yes, we are most
2 certainly still in need of Bundy Aid. We
3 think it's one of the best investments that
4 the state can make right now. The program is
5 funded at \$35 million, which is only about
6 18 percent of the statutory level of the
7 funding that we could be receiving.

8 But it's a great investment because,
9 you know, schools don't get the money unless
10 they submit a report to SED. The amount that
11 they get is based on the number of students
12 that they graduate. And so it's
13 performance-based, and that's why I say it's
14 a great return on investment for the State of
15 New York.

16 But yes, we are indeed seeking an
17 increase in Bundy Aid.

18 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Okay. Thank
19 you.

20 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Senate?

21 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Senator Webb.

22 SENATOR WEBB: Good afternoon,
23 everyone. Thank you all so much for the
24 great programs that you provide.

1 As I shared earlier, I, you know, was
2 a CSTEP student and most certainly understand
3 also Liberty Partnership. And so my
4 questions -- I know we're pressed for time --
5 is I know we've been talking a lot about
6 enrollment.

7 My question for you all is, what can
8 we be doing to lift up the stories of
9 retention in the roles that your respective
10 programs play in that narrative with regards
11 to both SUNY and CUNY?

12 And I would add on the success rate as
13 it relates to connections to careers. I
14 don't know if you have that information based
15 off of, you know, number of underrepresented
16 students, but I was curious if you could lift
17 up a little bit more about the impact that
18 your programs have on retention in our SUNY
19 and CUNY schools.

20 MS. ALTMAN: If I can speak to your
21 question as it relates to maybe some possible
22 considerations for retention efforts.
23 Although Liberty Partnership Program serves
24 primarily 5th through 12th grade students, we

1 do have -- and we are performance-based. But
2 part of that program is, you know,
3 post-secondary.

4 We try to follow up with our students
5 for at least two years after they've
6 graduated. And from, you know, the data that
7 we collect based on that, we're seeing that
8 our students, although we've gotten them, you
9 know, promoted and graduated and thinking
10 about their future and, in some instances --
11 in a lot of instances, actually -- pursuing
12 post-secondary education, that they didn't
13 just become un-at-risk all of a sudden. You
14 know, they still need services.

15 And we often find ourselves providing
16 those services. Case management -- so we
17 continue to provide wraparound services, but
18 in a very un-prescribed way where it's -- you
19 know, we find students will be assigned a
20 counselor if they're lucky to, at an
21 institute of higher education and during that
22 very prescribed setting it's a certain amount
23 of minutes, right, an increment of an hour
24 that they're seen with that counselor once a

1 semester.

2 Whereas when they're following up with
3 Liberty, it's in a very un-prescribed manner.
4 And I think that's -- I think that's really
5 helpful to them.

6 DR. ALBA: Senator Webb, I know ---
7 thank you for your question. And I
8 appreciate you being a sister of mine, being
9 Opportunity Program alums ourselves.

10 Some statistics. CSTEP students --
11 over 75 percent of CSTEP students graduate.
12 Graduates pursue professional degrees of
13 study in STEM and CSTEP targeted fields. At
14 the STEP level, the precollege level, over
15 80 percent of our STEP graduates pursue
16 professional degree programs of study in
17 college.

18 So those are some clear data points
19 there. What can we do to support and lift up
20 the stories of retention? We need to
21 increase the funding 20 percent of all
22 Opportunity Programs.

23 You have a 5 through 12 program in
24 LPP, 7 through 16 program in STEP and CSTEP,

1 and of course we have our brothers and
2 sisters at HEOP, EOP, and of course SEEK.
3 That's how we uplift the narratives of
4 retention.

5 We have the academic model at
6 institutions that come with ready-made
7 professionals with professional services and
8 funding that address the specific issues that
9 appear on our campuses. We provide the
10 community, we provide the direct support, and
11 we have the outcomes to prove that.

12 I hope I answered your question.

13 SENATOR WEBB: (Inaudible; mic off.)

14 -- about ways to bolster the marketing
15 of people understanding how impactful these
16 programs are with relation to retention.

17 Thank you.

18 DR. ALBA: Absolutely. I think the
19 way to market that, increase the funding and
20 the RFPs will come.

21 (Laughter.)

22 DR. ALBA: Yes.

23 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

24 Alicia, did -- you went already,

1 right? So we have Assemblyman Eachus next.

2 ASSEMBLYMAN EACHUS: Thank you.

3 Assemblyman Chris Eachus.

4 I'd just like to -- you actually
5 covered some of the stuff that I was going to
6 go through, but the first thing I would like
7 to say, as I mentioned, that I grew up with
8 13 foster brothers and sisters, so I'm very
9 proud of that.

10 These services that we're talking
11 about here that all five of you represent --
12 and I will reiterate what I said earlier in
13 this hearing -- these are lifesaving
14 programs. They are.

15 In the high school I taught -- Liberty
16 Partnership Program, I'm glad you mentioned
17 it. We're not just talking about -- we are
18 in higher education, but we're not just
19 talking about higher education. We're
20 talking about getting kids -- you know,
21 actual individuals -- into higher education
22 with these programs.

23 And they do work, and I will vouch for
24 that. CSTEP, STEP program, keeping them in

1 the programs. You know, retention. And we
2 have made reference to that, you know, quite
3 a bit all along.

4 I would like to -- I know you were
5 asked about BOCES and, you know, how can
6 BOCES -- you're either in BOCES or you're
7 not. One of the best ways that we can get
8 rid of that stigma, shall we call it, almost,
9 is like a high school that I taught in, in a
10 very urban environment, we are a cooperative
11 high school. We have our BOCES programs in
12 the school.

13 And of course not every school can
14 support a full BOCES program. But they can
15 support some of the programs. And, you know,
16 we have magnet school systems and so on like
17 that that go on, so parents, children can
18 select from that and, you know, decide
19 what -- maybe what type of program they might
20 be interested in and so on like that.

21 So I think creating more cooperative
22 high schools is one of the ways to actually
23 alleviate that problem.

24 I just wanted to, you know, ask you,

1 maybe beg you -- the best salespeople that
2 you folks have are the kids in the programs.
3 Get them to us. Get those success stories to
4 us, please, whatever it takes. I know it's
5 problematic with transportation, permission
6 sometimes, time and all. But I think that
7 everybody is 100 percent sold when we see the
8 sux -- successes, excuse me, I have an Altoid
9 in my mouth -- the successes in your program
10 and all.

11 So please do whatever you can. Thank
12 you.

13 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We have --
14 there are no further Senators.

15 But Assemblymember Simon.

16 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Thank you. It
17 was good to see so many of you a couple of
18 weeks ago when we were talking with you and
19 some of your students. You should have been
20 there, Chris.

21 (Laughter.)

22 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: So I have just a
23 follow-up question, because for some of your
24 programs I know that you are also working

1 with students with disabilities. And, of
2 course, some students with disabilities
3 can -- you know, they don't have to age out
4 till 21. They might get their high school
5 diploma later, depending on that program.

6 I'm curious if you're keeping that
7 data. Because I think one of the big
8 challenges for students with disabilities is
9 what are those programs that can support
10 them. Disability services, generally not
11 that model. Some of the TRIO programs can
12 work with that as well. So if you could tell
13 me a little bit more about that and also --
14 so any of you.

15 DR. ALBA: I can speak to the work
16 that we do at the college level.

17 CSTEP programs serve as sort of
18 advocates of a unique nature where we bridge
19 all offices of the university or college that
20 we are housed in, to ensure students receive
21 the support.

22 So a lot of the work that we do is
23 making sure, one, that students are aware of
24 the services that are needed -- and of course

1 the paperwork that's required. If they in
2 fact enter college -- because a lot of these
3 students sort of overcompensate by the pure
4 talent that they have -- and they need to
5 receive evaluative services, we try to help
6 them and assist them with pointing them --
7 with consultation with people on our campuses
8 to get them evaluated at the college level.

9 Some of the disadvantages are if you
10 don't come in with paperwork into a college,
11 you then have to get evaluated, and that's a
12 very expensive proposition.

13 And so a lot of the CSTEP programs on
14 college campuses -- as I'm sure it is not
15 unfamiliar to our HEOP brothers and sisters
16 as well -- we really try to coordinate with
17 our disability office. And then of course
18 based on the student, the situation, we
19 provide services, either through bridging
20 them with campus offices or helping offset
21 some of the costs there at the college.

22 I don't want to take time away from
23 LPP.

24 MS. ALTMAN: In regards to helping

1 address students with special needs and
2 concerns -- well, we worked in the past, you
3 know, prior to COVID, and things have
4 changed, but one part of our program was a
5 service that we provided at the
6 pre-collegiate level where we would take,
7 let's say, like the ACCUPLACER -- you know,
8 the college placement test -- and we would
9 prep our students for that test as early as
10 their junior year. So this way at least
11 they're familiar with the test, because we
12 want to try to at least help them overcome
13 some of the barriers that are, you know,
14 preventing them from getting to higher
15 education.

16 So enabling them to take these tests
17 earlier, just to be exposed to them, provides
18 the necessary remediation to get them to
19 where they need to be so that they can place
20 at college level.

21 And then, you know, getting -- you
22 know, we foster interrelationships between
23 the IHEs and the LEAs where we're, you know,
24 introducing them to the various services that

1 are available to them at the collegiate level
2 early on.

3 DR. ALBA: We're promoting services,
4 of course, in a way.

5 MS. ALTMAN: Yeah.

6 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

7 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Anybody else, if
8 you want to tell me what you're doing, let me
9 know later.

10 MS. ALTMAN: Thank you.

11 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

12 We have one Assemblymember,
13 Assemblymember Chandler-Waterman.

14 ASSEMBLYWOMAN CHANDLER-WATERMAN:
15 Hello, thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you to
16 everyone here.

17 I just had a question as a former
18 educator both in high school and a professor
19 as well, and having four children -- one in
20 CUNY, one in SUNY, and one about to go to
21 CUNY or SUNY, right?

22 (Laughter.)

23 ASSEMBLYWOMAN CHANDLER-WATERMAN: So a
24 lot of college tuition, right?

1 So I see here where you talk about
2 CSTEP and STEP need an additional 20 percent
3 in funding in order for the programs to
4 exactly, you know, respond to the needs that
5 may cause barriers, right, for people to get
6 into STEM, health.

7 And I don't know if you know with
8 behavioral health and mental health, we have
9 a lack of staffing there. Right? So then
10 that's something I don't know if y'all was
11 thinking of kind of really highlighting that,
12 you know, because we need incentives to
13 people -- we have beds but no staffing for
14 that, and the correlation. I don't know if
15 that was a thought-out process you had when
16 you put this together.

17 DR. ALBA: So the social work,
18 licensed mental health counselors,
19 psychologists -- those are CSTEP-targeted
20 professions. This young lady at the end of
21 the table, she would be a CSTEP-eligible
22 student interested in psychology. And how
23 CSTEP would respond to that, they'd try to
24 connect a student to professions and labs to

1 get them research experience. We know that
2 that's important.

3 And of course they have to volunteer.
4 We have budgets that are set up to provide a
5 living stipend to make sure they're not
6 taking off and having to work at a retail
7 store to pay bills.

8 So this is -- this is the -- we're a
9 Legislature program. That's why I say we're
10 sons and daughters of the Legislature,
11 because you all have created us and now you
12 continue to fund us and provide a gold
13 standard throughout the country of how
14 intervention models like this work for STEP
15 and CSTEP.

16 Nationwide, no one does what STEP and
17 CSTEP does. Nationwide, no one -- no one
18 really does what New York State does in terms
19 of opportunity programs. This is a highly
20 developed model of working with students from
21 historically underrepresented groups to move
22 them along, provide social upward mobility
23 and of course create future taxpayers.
24 Because that's part of what it's about.

1 But having actualized young people
2 thinking about the world around them, that's
3 exactly what we are -- and lend their talents
4 and services. So that's exactly how we
5 respond.

6 With the health professions --

7 ASSEMBLYWOMAN CHANDLER-WATERMAN: I
8 would love to see more of that when you're --

9 DR. ALBA: Oh, absolutely.

10 I'm a trained mental health
11 professional. That's a trained mental health
12 professional there --

13 ASSEMBLYWOMAN CHANDLER-WATERMAN:
14 Especially culturally responsive.

15 DR. ALBA: No question.

16 ASSEMBLYWOMAN CHANDLER-WATERMAN:
17 Especially in the Black and brown community.

18 DR. ALBA: That's the only way to do
19 it nowadays.

20 ASSEMBLYWOMAN CHANDLER-WATERMAN:
21 Right.

22 DR. ALBA: Because we know the harm
23 that has caused not being responsive to
24 cultural nuances. That's an oppressive kind

1 of format, and moving forward -- so I
2 appreciate your comments. And we're on the
3 ground doing that great work.

4 ASSEMBLYWOMAN CHANDLER-WATERMAN: All
5 right. Thank you.

6 DR. ALBA: Thank you.

7 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

8 I don't believe that we have any more
9 questions for this panel. Thank you for
10 being here and spending time with us.

11 DR. ALBA: Thank you. No problem.

12 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: If you're keeping
13 score, we're up to Panel D: New York City
14 Alliance against Sexual Assault, Reproductive
15 Justice Collective and Advocates, and Swipe
16 Out Hunger.

17 And I would just advise the speakers
18 for Panel E -- NYPIRG, Association of Private
19 Colleges, National Council of State Boards of
20 Nursing, and Columbia Health to make your way
21 down to us -- lower chair -- so that you'll
22 be ready for the final panel.

23 Can we have quiet in the hearing room,
24 please, so we can continue.

1 Thank you. Can we start with the
2 New York City Alliance against Sexual
3 Assault.

4 MS. MILES: Good evening. My name is
5 Emily Miles, and I'm the executive director
6 of the New York City Alliance Against Sexual
7 Assault. And I'm here representing the
8 Enough Is Not Enough Campaign asking for
9 increased funding for the Enough Is Enough
10 programming from \$4.5 to \$9.6 million.

11 In July 2015, Enough is Enough, or
12 EIE, was established to address sexual
13 assault, domestic violence, and stalking on
14 college campuses. An addition to much-needed
15 advancements in New York State law, the
16 legislation created an EIE funding initiative
17 for rape crisis programs which now supports
18 53 organizations across the state to work
19 collaboratively with college campuses to
20 prevent sexual violence and provide
21 intervention when sexual violence does occur.

22 Let me start by saying that the Enough
23 Is Enough program is truly incredible. Every
24 day, EIE coordinators are on campuses across

1 the state training thousands of students,
2 faculty, and administrators, providing
3 technical assistance to ensure campuses are
4 abiding by federal and state regulations, and
5 connecting survivors to trauma-informed
6 services to begin the path of healing.

7 But despite the strength of this
8 program, there remains a number of gaps in
9 program delivery and access to students
10 across the state. EIE has been flat-funded
11 at \$4.5 million since its inception, and each
12 year the purchasing power diminishes. Over
13 60 colleges across the state are not
14 affiliated with an official EIE program,
15 accounting for 92,000 students not connected
16 to these critical services.

17 At campuses being served, current
18 programs report a lack of adequate staffing
19 and program resources and an inability to
20 reach the depth necessary to truly make a
21 difference on campuses. At the Alliance we
22 partner with 14 campuses across New York City
23 and have one full-time coordinator. That's
24 over 102,000 students for one person.

1 I have to say that my coordinator is
2 amazing. She's a fantastic individual, and
3 her dedication and skill is beyond anything I
4 can imagine. But there are only 24 hours in
5 a day, and there's no real way for her to
6 conduct the level of trainings and outreach
7 necessary to meet the needs of those
8 102,000 students.

9 And unfortunately our story is not an
10 outlier. In each of your districts there is
11 an EIE program that is not receiving the
12 services that it needs. In each of your
13 districts there are students that are not
14 being connected to these critical resources
15 because the EIE programs do not have critical
16 funding.

17 To fill these gaps, we are asking that
18 the state increase its annual investment to
19 \$9.6 million to expand the reach of EIE
20 programs to invest in culturally responsive
21 and linguistically appropriate prevention
22 materials and to enhance training and
23 technical assistance to EIE programs.

24 Many of you heard the statistic that

1 one in four women report a completed or
2 attempted sexual assault in their lifetime.
3 But what you might not know is over
4 80 percent of those assaults occur before the
5 age of 25.

6 We have the tools to stop this level
7 of violence, and I ask for your investment in
8 order to do so. Thank you.

9 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

10 Next, Reproductive Justice Collective.

11 MS. RAO: Good afternoon. My name is
12 Niharika Rao, and I'm a student, abortion
13 doula, and the lead organizer of the
14 Reproductive Justice Collective, a coalition
15 of New York's student and youth organizers
16 from Columbia, CUNY, NYU, and SUNY schools.

17 I also work at Advocates for Youth, a
18 national nonprofit that works with young
19 people to champion youth rights to bodily
20 autonomy and health equity.

21 Thank you for the opportunity to
22 appear before you today to discuss the need
23 to invest state resources for abortion care
24 in our higher education institutions.

1 Under the Executive Budget, SUNY and
2 CUNY campuses would be required to provide
3 access to medication abortion at student
4 health centers. Our original legislation
5 also established a fund jointly overseen by
6 the State Comptroller, Health Commissioner,
7 and chancellors from SUNY and CUNY to cover
8 student out of pocket and campus
9 implementation costs.

10 This fund does not exist in the
11 current bill's version and in the proposed
12 Executive Budget, but we urge you to allocate
13 the needed state resources through the fund
14 described at a sum of \$10 million.

15 Medication abortion is an extremely
16 safe method to end a pregnancy up to
17 10 weeks. Only 0.4 percent of patients
18 require hospitalization with serious
19 complications. As New York becomes a
20 destination state for abortion access
21 post-Roe, our clinics and abortion funds are
22 experiencing immense demand from patients out
23 of state and increased protest and harassment
24 from anti-abortion groups.

1 As an abortion doula who has supported
2 multiple college students through their
3 abortions, I've seen firsthand the impact it
4 has had on young people. For many this is
5 the first time they are navigating a deeply
6 complicated medical system on their own.
7 Young people in their 20s account for more
8 than half of all abortions in the
9 United States, but also face unique barriers,
10 including limited financial resources and
11 increased stigmatization.

12 SUNY students face an average trip of
13 over 10 miles to the closest abortion clinic.
14 We can reduce wait times and funding
15 pressures for clinics and abortion funds by
16 making on-campus abortion pills available to
17 students. On-campus provision reduces out of
18 pocket costs, decreases travel time, and
19 lessens information barriers to vital
20 healthcare.

21 Seeing this policy enacted in both
22 California and Massachusetts, we anticipate
23 the main associated cost to be training for
24 clinicians and possible site upgrades. Both

1 the American Medical Association and public
2 health experts have recommended that
3 medication abortion does not require an
4 ultrasound or a physical examination.

5 This policy directly addresses
6 barriers and bridges the reality between
7 New York being a state where abortion is
8 legal to one where abortion is truly
9 accessible. Over 1800 New Yorkers have
10 signed a petition supporting abortion pills
11 on campus and demanding the end of the
12 continual exceptionalization and
13 politicization of abortion care. This
14 investment would help ensure all students
15 have access to the healthcare they need,
16 regardless of their income, location, or
17 personal circumstances.

18 Thank you for your time, and I'm
19 really looking forward to your questions.

20 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

21 We go to Swipe Out Hunger.

22 MR. FRIEDLANDER: Thank you.

23 My name is Robb Friedlander, advocacy
24 director of Swipe Out Hunger, a national

1 organization committed to ending college
2 student hunger.

3 We are joined today by a number of
4 stakeholders from across the state who are
5 ready to raise the level of student services
6 on college campuses to those states who have
7 passed Hunger Free Campus, such as
8 New Jersey, Pennsylvania, California,
9 Massachusetts, and more.

10 Since the pandemic and the end of
11 recent federal government COVID relief
12 programs, the crisis of college student
13 hunger has risen to levels never seen before.
14 Just 20 minutes up the road from here, at
15 SUNY Schenectady Community College, Robyn
16 King, the director of wellness and support
17 services, notes that they are serving three
18 times the number of students as they were
19 this time last year.

20 And while in 2019 former governor
21 Cuomo mandated that all public institutions
22 of higher education have a food pantry on
23 their campus, that mandate did not and has
24 not to this day produced the resources for

1 those campuses to start, grow, and sustain
2 those food pantries.

3 And while public institutions have
4 received increased funding in recent years,
5 that funding has only filled the gaps left
6 behind by COVID. And it's also specified
7 detailed allocations that have prevented
8 institutions from investing in their basic
9 need centers and campus food pantries.

10 According to a 2020 study by Healthy
11 CUNY out of the CUNY School of Public Health,
12 out of nine CUNY pantries, only one had a
13 budget of over \$20,000. What we have been
14 left with, with rare exceptions, is a
15 patchwork of deteriorating or missing
16 services across the state, wholly funded by
17 students themselves or small one-time
18 foundation grants.

19 Examples include SUNY Oneonta, who,
20 due to a lack of funding, their pantry
21 consists of two shelves on a bookshelf with a
22 few noodles and granola bars. SUNY Buffalo,
23 the largest public institution in the state,
24 funds their on-campus pantry solely through

1 the student activity fee, forcing
2 economically challenged students to fund
3 their own food pantry.

4 CUNY City Tech. Until this semester,
5 CUNY City Tech had a mobile pantry that
6 changed location each time, was only open for
7 two or three days a month, by appointment
8 only through an online forum which was broken
9 online for most of the year.

10 Hostos Community College had gone over
11 a year without a functioning cafeteria. To
12 fill the gap of the increasing need, the
13 staff member filled out application after
14 application, finally securing a one-time
15 \$10,000 grant to open the pantry.

16 Back at SUNY Schenectady Community
17 College, since they compete for the same
18 grant funding as everyone else, they go
19 through their trash cans and recycling bins
20 to collect bottles and cans in order to
21 afford items for their students.

22 Through the Hunger Free Campus
23 funding, higher education institutions would
24 receive \$10 million to strengthen their

1 existing basic needs and anti-hunger efforts,
2 leverage these grants and staff basic needs
3 positions, train student advocates, expand
4 university SNAP outreach, upgrade existing
5 basic needs resources like food pantries,
6 meal donation programs, and housing
7 insecurity programs.

8 Swipe Out Hunger urges your support of
9 Hunger Free Campus grant funding in this
10 fiscal year and an appropriation of
11 \$10 million in the one-house budgets.

12 Thank you for your time and
13 consideration.

14 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

15 We go to Assemblywoman Fahy, three
16 minutes.

17 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Thank you. Thank
18 you each for your passion and concern; it
19 comes right across from each of you. So
20 thank you for being here, thank you for
21 waiting this out as well.

22 I'm just going to start briefly with
23 the hunger, since it's fresh on my mind.
24 What do you think is fueling the rise on the

1 campuses? We know COVID, we've talked a lot
2 today about the impacts of COVID and just how
3 many changes we're seeing, how much more
4 anxiety we're seeing. But in addition to
5 that, what do you think we're seeing -- in
6 addition to the funding, can you remind me
7 what your funding is at right now?

8 And also talk about what -- are we
9 doing enough to make sure students are
10 qualifying or signing up for SNAP or food
11 benefits?

12 MR. FRIEDLANDER: Absolutely. So I'll
13 kind of tackle first what's causing the
14 increase.

15 You know, in addition to the economy
16 still recovering -- of course, we have
17 skyrocketing rents across the city and across
18 the state, and a plethora of other economic
19 issues that are impacting students. But one
20 of the things is that we know that from
21 inflation, groceries are the number-one item
22 of any category of item that has increased in
23 the past year. This month it was 11.9
24 percent, last month it was 13 percent.

1 So what that means is that our food
2 banks -- like Food Bank in New York City or
3 City Harvest, Island Harvest across the
4 entire state, and Feeding New York State, who
5 supports this bill -- are having to send
6 smaller shipments to their community pantries
7 or, if college pantries are buying food at
8 retail cost, that cost obviously -- those
9 dollars go shorter due to the increased costs
10 of food.

11 I'm sorry -- you had one more
12 question.

13 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: SNAP. Is SNAP --
14 what is your current funding? You said you
15 want 10 million. Remind me what your current
16 funding is. And then the SNAP, the SNAP
17 benefits -- are we doing enough to enroll
18 students in SNAP?

19 MR. FRIEDLANDER: Yeah, absolutely
20 not.

21 And so one of the things that we see
22 across the entire state is almost every
23 instance -- almost every on-campus food
24 pantry receives zero dollars in funding from

1 their institution or from the system. They
2 are fully funded either, again, by students
3 themselves or by small foundation grants,
4 often one-time, of about \$5,000 to \$15,000.

5 The issue with SNAP in particular is
6 that it's such a complicated, long, and hard
7 process. And so what we need are more
8 resources to have students trained in
9 enrolling other students in SNAP, the
10 application process. We need staff there to
11 be able to help students through that
12 process. We need more resources on campus to
13 be able to get students into that pipeline.

14 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: While we have a
15 few more seconds, I just want to switch.

16 And Emily, with the Alliance Against
17 Sexual Assault, it's great to hear that you
18 feel Enough is Enough is having an impact.
19 That's very encouraging. We have been
20 talking about that recently.

21 How is funding distributed? You
22 mentioned that there's still many needs. Can
23 you talk about how the money goes out at this
24 point?

1 MS. MILES: Absolutely. The funding
2 is currently based on a formula that includes
3 the geographic region that the EIE provider
4 covers. So at the Alliance we cover all five
5 boroughs, and so we receive a bit of a larger
6 portion of the funding than someone only
7 serving one county, for example.

8 That said, we receive the maximum
9 amount of funding and that is barely enough
10 for one full-time coordinator.

11 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Thank you.

12 Thank you, Chair.

13 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Senate?

14 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Hi.

15 Senator Webb.

16 SENATOR WEBB: Yes. Thank you all for
17 your testimony and for the work that you do.

18 I'm going to start with Swipe Out
19 Hunger. I've actually done a lot of work on
20 food insecurity, and one of the things I was
21 always fascinated by is that we have a
22 significant number of students who rely on
23 food pantries in order to actually have food
24 to eat, and yet we're talking about raising

1 tuition.

2 So one of my questions is, do you have
3 a breakdown on the number of students that
4 are food-insecure across our campuses? And
5 who are dependent upon food pantries?

6 MR. FRIEDLANDER: Yeah, in 2020, the
7 School of Public Health -- the CUNY School of
8 Public Health engaged in a report called the
9 Real College Report. In that report they
10 found out that 48 percent of all CUNY
11 students were food-insecure. That goes up to
12 51 percent at the community college level.

13 According to the 2019 SUNY Food
14 Insecurity Task Force report, on average
15 40 percent of SUNY students were
16 food-insecure, and that goes up to 54 percent
17 on the community college level, with even
18 higher numbers at the EOCs on SUNY campuses.

19 SENATOR WEBB: And then I know I have
20 limited time left just to go to both
21 Reproductive Justice and New York City
22 Alliance Against Sexual Assault.

23 What are some additional supports that
24 we could be offering with regards to

1 expanding access to your programs? I know
2 you're asking for additional funding, but I
3 was just curious -- what are other ways that
4 we can either promote awareness about the
5 resources that your programs actually offer
6 with regards to our campus communities?

7 MS. RAO: I will say that as a
8 student, actual community education is a
9 really big part of both sexual violence
10 prevention and reproductive justice work.

11 It's really great to have all of these
12 policies and fundings in place, but it's
13 really hard when students don't know they
14 exist to actually access them. So really
15 having a streamlined form and access point,
16 ways and centralized systems that students
17 know that they can go to these resources.
18 Helplines are really, really helpful for all
19 of the above.

20 But, yeah, that tends to be the
21 barrier.

22 MS. MILES: Absolutely. And as I
23 said, when you have limited staffing so EIE
24 coordinators are really only focused on the

1 training on campus, so they're not able to do
2 the outreach that's really necessary to bring
3 people into the program.

4 This additional funding would allow
5 that to happen and allow it to happen to
6 communities that have historically been
7 difficult to reach, and bring an expertise
8 from those communities to actually do that
9 outreach, which I think is critically
10 important.

11 The one other piece that I would throw
12 in there -- and this was in my written
13 testimony -- is that a majority of the
14 programs don't have access to materials that
15 are linguistically appropriate, and that
16 translation piece is really -- makes it
17 difficult to actually reach those
18 communities.

19 Additionally, the New York City
20 Alliance has a resource guide of all the rape
21 crisis programs and all services available to
22 survivors in New York City. I would be happy
23 to follow up with any of your offices to
24 provide that to you. And the state coalition

1 has done something similar. I'd be happy to
2 connect anyone to their local EIE program.

3 SENATOR WEBB: Thank you.

4 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

5 We go to Assemblyman Epstein, three
6 minutes.

7 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: I also want to
8 thank you for all you're doing for New York
9 and for our college students.

10 And Niharika, thank you for your
11 advocacy on this work. I know it has been
12 great to collaborate with you.

13 So \$10 million -- is that for the
14 campuses, do you think? Is that for the
15 students? Is there a mix? And how do you
16 break that down?

17 MS. RAO: Yeah. For the funding
18 model, it's based on what passed in
19 California and Massachusetts, which really
20 functioned off of a grant-based program. So
21 the state allocated the funds, and then
22 individual campuses applied for a certain
23 amount of money.

24 We anticipate the money going both for

1 site upgrades -- so this despite an
2 ultrasound machine not being needed -- there
3 could be like, you know, a speculum or an
4 exam table in case a physical exam is needed
5 in the exceptional cases. And also training.

6 But really importantly, which is
7 something California didn't do but we're
8 trying to be pioneers at because we're
9 New York, is trying to allocate funds for
10 out-of-pocket costs as well.

11 A really big barrier is that a lot of
12 states are now preventing the coverage of
13 abortion, and we have a lot of students who
14 come from these states that are paying \$600
15 out of pocket for a medication abortion. So
16 we're actually really wanting to provide part
17 of these funds to cover those unexpected
18 costs as well.

19 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Thank you.

20 And just for all of you, I know we
21 only have a little time left, but we've been
22 talking a lot about losing college students.
23 They're like -- they're dropping out, we're
24 not getting them back into the system.

1 You know, are these part of the
2 reasons why we're losing people, is food
3 insecurity? We're losing people from sexual
4 assaults on campus and not having enough
5 training, people not having access to
6 abortion earlier? Are these some of the
7 reasons we have? And free resources here,
8 could that help us retain college students
9 longer so that they can graduate?

10 MS. RAO: Yes.

11 (Laughter.)

12 MR. FRIEDLANDER: And also in the 2019
13 report that Healthy CUNY and the School of
14 Public Health did as well, they found that
15 food-insecure students were two-and-a-half
16 times more likely within the CUNY system to
17 either fail or drop out of the school as
18 well.

19 So when we talk retention, we are
20 really talking about all of the basic needs,
21 from health to housing to food security.

22 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: And so in the
23 past we have kind of given CUNY and SUNY
24 lump-sum amounts of money and said, Hey,

1 here's a lump sum, do what you want. If we
2 were able to do that this year, would that
3 help your issues? Or do you feel like we
4 really need to be more tailored in our
5 approach to funding?

6 MS. MILES: I think for us, you know,
7 the rape crisis programs are the ones that
8 have the expertise to go on campus and do
9 this work. That expertise largely doesn't
10 exist on campuses.

11 So you can give them funding and, you
12 know, we support a strong and robust higher
13 education system, but if you don't have the
14 right crisis programs on campus providing
15 those services, you are not going to be
16 reaching survivors in a trauma-informed way.

17 MS. RAO: Yeah. Same here. I think
18 like we're really working with a lot of
19 advocates and students around implementation
20 of this policy itself, and I think it really
21 helps to let the people who know best do the
22 work they know how to do.

23 MR. FRIEDLANDER: I will just quickly
24 add, those lump sums are not getting to basic

1 need centers. So that's something that we
2 need, to directly allocate resources to these
3 services. Because those lump sums for a
4 multitude of reasons are not actually going
5 down into the actual programs on the ground.

6 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

7 We go to Assemblywoman Simon.

8 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Thank you.

9 Thank you very much for your testimony
10 and the incredibly important work that you're
11 doing.

12 I have a couple of questions. One is
13 with regard to the availability of medication
14 abortions or other abortion care on our
15 campuses, for example.

16 Are you -- I'm concerned about the
17 states where this private insurance, private
18 insurer may not cover it because of the state
19 requirements, and whether there is an issue
20 on campuses with regard to fear of liability
21 if they provide that care for somebody whose
22 state they come from does not provide that
23 care.

24 MS. RAO: Yeah. So currently the

1 funding -- the funding mechanism that we
2 proposed and have talked more about in my
3 written testimony -- actually creates part of
4 this funding available for these
5 out-of-pocket states.

6 An alternative we're also really
7 encouraging CUNY and SUNY campuses to
8 implement is a really codified referral
9 process to abortion access funds and
10 practical support organizations that can help
11 with these type of concerns and help provide
12 coverage for out-of-state folks. These
13 abortion funds are primarily working with
14 out-of-state folks who are coming to New York
15 for abortion care.

16 Regarding the liability concerns, our
17 experience is that because abortion care is
18 actually a lot less risky than most of the
19 procedures provided at these campus health
20 centers, they're usually covered by standard
21 malpractice medical insurance.

22 But there's actually a really great
23 list of resources available from the
24 Reproductive Health Access Project that talks

1 about primary care implementation and goes
2 through like all the billing procedures,
3 insurance concerns, legal like loopholes that
4 you may need to jump through when it comes to
5 this type of coverage.

6 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: And are you
7 finding with regard to sexual assault, for
8 example, resistance on the part of any of the
9 campuses in New York to students getting
10 those kind of services?

11 Because obviously a lot of times these
12 things happen on campus and sometimes we know
13 who the perpetrators are.

14 MS. MILES: Yeah.

15 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: I mean, often we
16 know who the perpetrators are.

17 MS. MILES: Absolutely. You know, the
18 Enough is Enough legislation closed a lot of
19 legislative issues in the state, but it
20 didn't mandate campuses work with rape crisis
21 programs.

22 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Right.

23 MS. MILES: In fact, we have to go out
24 and we have to actively engage campuses.

1 Those 60 campuses that have no
2 connection to EIE programs, many of them it's
3 because they don't want them. And so it's
4 the -- on the burden of the EIE programs to
5 go out and have to recruit those
6 institutions. That takes an incredible
7 amount of time. And when you are working
8 with 102,000 students on your campuses that
9 you already have, you have limited
10 availability to do that.

11 We are actually drafting now some
12 edits to the EIE legislation that we plan to
13 introduce next session, so we look forward to
14 talking with all of you about those then.

15 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Thank you. I
16 look forward to it. Thank you very much.

17 And food insecurity -- I'm sure -- I'm
18 happy to talk to you further, but I'm running
19 out of time here, so -- but thank you for
20 your testimony.

21 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Assemblywoman
22 Hyndman, you have a -- oh, okay.

23 So we have no further questions for
24 this panel.

1 MS. MILES: Thank you very much.

2 MS. RAO: Thank you very much.

3 MR. FRIEDLANDER: Thank you.

4 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you for
5 being here and the work you folks all do for
6 the students of New York State.

7 Next we call our final panel, Panel E:
8 NYPIRG, Association of Private Colleges,
9 National Council of State Boards of Nursing,
10 and Columbia Health.

11 And I think we'll go out of order with
12 this group and start with Columbia Health.
13 Columbia -- I know -- if you can go first,
14 please.

15 MS. BERNITZ: Thank you.

16 Madam Chairs, ranking members and
17 members of the Assembly and Senate, my name
18 is Dr. Melanie Bernitz, M.D., and I serve as
19 the senior vice president of Columbia Health,
20 which is a student health service for the
21 32,000 students at Columbia University.

22 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Pull the mic
23 closer.

24 MS. BERNITZ: As a family physician,

1 college administrator and college health
2 provider with over 20 years of experience, I
3 appreciate the opportunity to testify today
4 and to share the reasons why I support
5 allowing New York to join the Interstate
6 Medical Licensure Compact and the Nurse
7 Licensure Compact, which will truly be
8 transformative to the care of almost
9 1 million students enrolled in higher
10 education in New York State.

11 On college campuses throughout our
12 state, healthcare teams provide high-quality
13 medical and mental healthcare to emerging
14 adults tailored to their needs and really
15 allowing them to become -- to be well, take
16 care of their health, and really succeed
17 academically.

18 Our students are more and more mobile.
19 They travel to their home states for breaks
20 in the summer, they get jobs and internships
21 in different states, and this causes lapses
22 in their healthcare. And as you are aware,
23 without continuity of care we can see adverse
24 outcomes which brings greater cost to our

1 healthcare system.

2 And these very same issues with breaks
3 in continuity of care negatively impact the
4 children of New York State constituents, your
5 very constituents, whether they are in
6 college out of state in Michigan, California,
7 or even Massachusetts, and they face the same
8 concerns when they return home to New York
9 and cannot see their on-campus providers.

10 These issues were amplified during the
11 pandemic when we sent our students all home
12 in March 2020. And it is important to
13 understand that when it comes to telehealth,
14 which has really become a part of our
15 healthcare system, licensing jurisdiction
16 lies not with where the provider is located
17 and licensed, but where the patient happens
18 to be physically located at the time the care
19 is provided, regardless of where they
20 normally reside.

21 So while we could support
22 New York-based students throughout their time
23 studying remotely, as other students returned
24 to their home states we were not able to

1 provide them the same care, due to these
2 state-based licensing restrictions.

3 As the pandemic recedes, we realize
4 the value of telehealth. It's not going
5 away. Many visits can be provided by video
6 visits without making someone come in for an
7 appointment, which is great for our students
8 who are busy studying, trying to fit their
9 appointments in between their classes and
10 their exams. But this is why this issue has
11 become so pressing.

12 We're also seeing a lot of oppressive
13 legislation across the U.S. around
14 reproductive rights and gender-affirming
15 care, and we want to be able to make sure our
16 students can get the care they need when they
17 need it.

18 So we really need to leverage the
19 lessons we learned through the past few years
20 and allow New York to join the interstate
21 compact so that our college students can get
22 timely care and not rely on pandemic
23 support -- that support.

24 Healthcare doesn't take breaks for

1 system of higher education is in deep
2 financial trouble. Far too many community
3 colleges and four-year public colleges as
4 well as independent ones are facing declining
5 enrollments -- some significantly -- yet are
6 now facing, at best, stagnant state financial
7 help.

8 The Governor's budget plan
9 unfortunately not only does too little to
10 reverse the trajectory of New York's system
11 of higher education -- she's adopted policies
12 that contributed mightily to the problem.

13 Investments in higher education not
14 only help produce more highly skilled workers
15 and more knowledgeable citizens, it also
16 provides a solid economic foundation for the
17 communities in which the institutions are
18 located. The economic rate of return is
19 solid and positive, often a far less risky
20 investment than some highly touted but poorly
21 performing other economic development
22 programs.

23 NYPIRG urges you to reject the
24 Governor's tuition proposal to raise tuition.

1 You've heard today that it's a predictable
2 way to raise revenue. Another predictable
3 way would be for you to increase state
4 support every year instead of asking the
5 students to have to pay more.

6 We also think you should restore the
7 cuts to the Opportunity Programs and the --
8 you've already heard that the Tuition
9 Assistance Program's anniversary, its
10 50th anniversary is next year. That provides
11 a platform to modernizing financial aid,
12 because one of the key ways that you help
13 keep students in college is to provide
14 financial assistance if they need it.

15 In terms of some of the enrollment
16 questions that have come up, there are
17 differences when we've looked at the
18 enrollment data. There's differences between
19 SUNY and CUNY, particularly pre-pandemic.
20 There's differences between the four-years
21 and the two-years. There's differences even
22 with independent colleges. And so lessons to
23 be learned can help from a deeper dive into
24 that.

1 I'm getting down to my last minute.

2 So the TAP gap contributed to those
3 problems. We think it's critically important
4 that you financially support higher
5 education.

6 NYPIRG, as you know, has submitted --
7 will have submitted five testimonies during
8 the budget hearings. I'm going to mention
9 just two things that are not related to
10 higher education. My apologies in advance.

11 One is today the Governor announced
12 \$3 million for the Town of Fair Haven to deal
13 with its resiliency issues, \$3 million of tax
14 dollars to do that. It's going to be
15 billions of dollars for the state to deal
16 with resiliency issues. Why should the
17 taxpayers foot the entire tab?

18 There's a bill, Climate Change
19 Superfund Act, where the oil companies will
20 pick up the tab. They have the money, and
21 it's their fault.

22 Lastly, with regards to tobacco
23 control, the Governor's proposed a dollar
24 increase on tobacco in the cigarette tax. We

1 think you should be spending more money on
2 tobacco control programs to help smokers to
3 quit so they don't have to pay the tax. The
4 state under Governor Cuomo slashed funding
5 for the program. It needs to be restored.

6 Thank you.

7 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

8 Association of Private Colleges.

9 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: Good evening.

10 Members of the Legislature, thank you
11 for the opportunity to share this testimony
12 on behalf of the Association of Private
13 Colleges. My name is Donna Stelling-Gurnett,
14 and I am the president of APC.

15 I'd like to start my testimony by
16 announcing that APC has changed its name from
17 the Association of Proprietary Colleges to
18 the Association of Private Colleges. Our new
19 name reflects the changing nature of higher
20 ed and the proprietary sector and better
21 reflects the 11 degree-granting
22 family-founded institutions that are members
23 of APC. We may have a new name, but we
24 remain committed to educational excellence,

1 access, and affordability.

2 I have submitted APC's written
3 testimony in advance, so in the interests of
4 time I will focus my remarks today on just
5 two of our priorities.

6 The first priority would be to expand
7 the part-time TAP program to include students
8 attending proprietary colleges. Since 2006,
9 students attending SUNY, CUNY and independent
10 nonprofit colleges have had access to
11 part-time TAP, but students attending
12 proprietary colleges have not.

13 Traditionally APC members encourage
14 full-time attendance with flexible schedules
15 and learning modalities, as well as offering
16 three full semesters per year that enable
17 students to graduate on time. However, as we
18 recover from the pandemic, our students may
19 need to attend part-time due to family or job
20 responsibilities. So we're requesting that
21 the part-time TAP program be expanded to
22 include students attending proprietary
23 colleges.

24 I'd also like to take this opportunity

1 to thank Senator Fernandez and Assemblywoman
2 Hyndman for sponsoring the sign-on letter
3 that garners support for this request.

4 The second priority would be to
5 address the disparity between the dependent
6 and independent TAP schedules. You may have
7 heard us talk about increasing the maximum
8 income threshold from 80,000 to 110,000 and
9 the maximum TAP award from 5,600 to 6,000.
10 However, if these changes were made, they
11 would only impact the dependent tax schedule.

12 If you're an independent student -- a
13 student that's not claimed on someone else's
14 taxes -- or you do not not have dependents
15 yourself, you're at a great disadvantage.

16 If you're married, the maximum income
17 threshold for your family is just \$40,000 per
18 year, and your maximum TAP award is
19 significantly lower at just \$3,525.

20 If you're single, your maximum income
21 threshold is only \$10,000 per year. These
22 are likely nontraditional students who are
23 returning to college to finish their degree
24 or reskill themselves for a different job.

1 So we would ask that the same TAP
2 award schedule be used regardless of
3 dependency status, that mirrors the higher
4 income threshold and the maximum TAP award.

5 Finally, I'd be remiss if I didn't
6 mention that the APC students are here in
7 Albany today and tomorrow to meet with their
8 legislators and share their stories, so
9 tomorrow take a look around for the
10 blue-and-white scarves and be sure to say
11 hello.

12 So thank you. With that, I'll end my
13 testimony and I'm happy to answer any
14 questions you may have.

15 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

16 National Council of State Boards of
17 Nursing.

18 MS. LIVANOS: Good evening, chairs and
19 members of the joint committee. Thank you
20 for the opportunity.

21 My name is Nicole Livanos, and I'm
22 with the National Council of State Boards of
23 Nursing. I'm here on behalf of the nurse
24 licensure compact that, if New York enacted

1 it this year, we would become the 40th member
2 state to join the NLC.

3 I'll focus on three main points today.
4 The first is that, if enacted, New York would
5 be joining a safe and tested compact. The
6 NLC has been operational for over 20 years,
7 facilitating licensure mobility for RNs and
8 LPNs. The NLC requires applicants to meet
9 their home state licensure requirements in
10 addition to 11 uniform licensure requirements
11 that are outlined right in the compact.

12 For member states, the compact
13 mandates communication between states to
14 ensure that significant investigatory
15 information is shared among party states.
16 And the compact requires all of this while
17 still maintaining licensure and enforcement
18 of state practice laws at the state level.

19 Second, the NLC is an important tool
20 in the toolbox for addressing the nursing
21 workforce shortage in New York. NLC allows
22 for flexibility in hiring nurses to fill
23 acute shortages, allows patients to have
24 access to more providers when needing care or

1 continuing care for students, and offers a
2 benefit to nursing students to remain in
3 New York for the benefit of flexible
4 licensure.

5 According to the New York State
6 Department of Health, it's predicted that
7 New York will face a shortage of 39,000
8 registered nurses by 2030. Short- and
9 long-term solutions are needed here.

10 Since COVID-19, legislative and
11 executive leaders took swift emergency action
12 to recruit providers across the country to
13 aid in New York's response. While
14 facilitating licensure mobility for these
15 nurses to New York, the emergency actions
16 lacked the protections and strict standards
17 that the NLC has.

18 Importantly also, this facilitates
19 mobility for both New York nurses to be more
20 mobile as well as nurses to come into
21 New York.

22 Third, the nurse licensure compact
23 will enable more patients to access expert
24 care from New York providers. Like the

1 flexibilities provided for the nursing
2 workforce, the compact enables patients to
3 choose to receive critical healthcare in the
4 state. Whether it's due to restrictive laws
5 or provider shortages across the country,
6 patients can seek primary reproductive or
7 mental healthcare care services in New York
8 under the compact.

9 For the above reasons, the compact has
10 strong and diverse support, and in nearly all
11 of the 39 jurisdictions that have enacted the
12 compact, that's been led by the support of
13 state nursing associations. The diverse
14 coalitions include telehealth organizations,
15 patient groups such as AARP, those groups
16 representing military families, and others.

17 The diversity of the coalition
18 demonstrates the impact that NLC has across
19 all of these groups. So we urge support for
20 the NLC in the budget and sponsorship of the
21 bill.

22 Thank you so much for your time.

23 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We go to
24 Pat Fahy.

1 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Thank you. I
2 appreciate all of the testimony. I
3 appreciate you staying with us this evening
4 as well.

5 I guess I'll just pick up on the
6 nursing, since you were the last one to
7 speak. A number of concerns on the compact.
8 There's just many tradeoffs that we've been
9 seeing from both sides on the issue. And if
10 you could help us with addressing some of
11 those, I would appreciate that.

12 For instance, while I'm a new chair,
13 I've been on the Higher Ed Committee for many
14 years and I can very much remember when we
15 passed the B.S. in 10, so New York has been
16 quite proud of the very high standards they
17 have for nurses, that they have 10 years to
18 get a B.S. degree.

19 Can you address how that would be
20 addressed with the compact, as well as -- my
21 understanding is there would be some
22 differences on the reproductive health -- the
23 training that might be required in New York,
24 versus what is not -- may or may not be

1 required in other states.

2 MS. LIVANOS: Thank you for that
3 question.

4 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Sure. Thank you.

5 MS. LIVANOS: So I'll address the
6 first part.

7 So nurses that have a primary state of
8 residence in New York will need to continue
9 to meet New York's licensure requirements.
10 So the compact is based on your primary state
11 of residence. So, so long as you are a
12 New York resident, you still need to meet
13 those requirements that New York has set into
14 law -- in addition to the 11 uniform
15 licensure requirements that ensures all
16 compact nurses have met at least those
17 baseline 11 requirements.

18 And so for nurses that are practicing
19 from other states coming to New York, as soon
20 as those individuals would move to New York
21 and change their residency, they would be
22 subject to meeting the requirements such as
23 the B.S.N. in 10 or any of the other
24 requirements that nurses must meet to

1 maintain and obtain a license here.

2 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Okay, thank you.

3 I look forward to more conversations on that
4 as we grapple with this issue.

5 I'm going to switch gears to the
6 Association of Private Colleges. Thank you
7 as well for your testimony. You mentioned
8 you represent 11 degree-granting programs,
9 and we spoke a little bit this morning or
10 this afternoon about a recent article that
11 addressed some concerns on loans.

12 Can you talk about if that's your 11,
13 or -- I actually don't know how many other
14 colleges there are, proprietary colleges,
15 that are not a part of your association. If
16 you could maybe give us a little data on
17 that.

18 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: Sure. Sure.
19 So APC represents 11 degree-granting,
20 primarily family-founded institutions. So
21 yes, they are proprietary.

22 And I believe there's about 20
23 overall, so we do have a majority of them.
24 Of the institutions, they represent about

1 25,000 students, of which about 20,000 attend
2 APC member colleges. So we do have the
3 majority of the students attending our
4 institution.

5 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: And do you want
6 to address the issue of the student loan debt
7 or default that again was raised in --

8 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: Yeah,
9 absolutely.

10 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY. This article, the
11 most recent one, was the Chalkbeat.

12 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: Right, right.
13 Thank you very much. I appreciate you
14 bringing that up.

15 You know, it's interesting, because we
16 did work with the reporter before this story
17 came out. And one of things that we had
18 cautioned her on is conflating the outcomes
19 of the non-degree proprietary schools versus
20 the degree-granting colleges. And that
21 default rate at five years does have both
22 mixed together.

23 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Thank you.

24 MS STELLING-GURNETT: So it's not just

1 the degree-granting colleges.

2 ASSEMBLYWOMAN FAHY: Thank you. Very
3 helpful.

4 Thank you, Chair.

5 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

6 Senator Murray.

7 SENATOR MURRAY: Thank you,

8 Chairwoman.

9 And thank you for being here.

10 I'm going to ask you a question that I
11 started the day with with the two
12 chancellors, when I asked them if they knew
13 the percentages of students, of graduates,
14 that remained here in New York. Do you have
15 similar --

16 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: I do. I do,
17 actually. Over 90 percent of our students
18 that are currently enrolled in APC member
19 colleges are from New York, and over
20 80 percent of those that graduate stay here
21 in New York to live and work afterwards.

22 SENATOR MURRAY: Okay. That's great
23 to hear. And the reason I bring this up is
24 now we'll go on to the TAP issue. And in

1 discussions we've said it's expensive to
2 raise the threshold. But I'm a small
3 business owner; I differentiate between
4 spending and investing. I think this would
5 be an investment.

6 I brought up in the last panel, again,
7 the 80,000 threshold for families. The
8 statewide thresholds -- we're a very diverse
9 state with different economies in different
10 areas. The income and the median income down
11 on Long Island is, you know, quite higher, so
12 an 80,000 threshold is really --

13 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: Correct.

14 SENATOR MURRAY: What would you
15 think -- and I'd ask anyone -- what would you
16 think of tying it maybe to the regional
17 median income and doing a percentage to that?
18 Maybe 200 percent of the median regional
19 income.

20 Would that be a fairer thing? Would
21 that get more students in? What would you
22 think of that, first?

23 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: Well, I mean,
24 we are recommending that you raise it from 80

1 to 110,000. Or maybe even 125, as I think I
2 heard you mention earlier, so it's more in
3 line with the enhanced tuition awards
4 program.

5 I mean, I'd have to look at it. I'm
6 not sure what the data would show. If it
7 would get more or not, it's hard to tell.

8 SENATOR MURRAY: We'd definitely get
9 more in Long Island, I'll guarantee you that.

10 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: Yes. Yes, you
11 would. There you go.

12 SENATOR MURRAY: But then I bring that
13 up also -- and when we're talking about TAP
14 and we talk about the Graduate TAP, which was
15 eliminated in 2010, what do you think of
16 bringing back the Graduate TAP but focusing
17 it on high-need and impact fields such as
18 nursing, things of that nature? What would
19 your thoughts be on that?

20 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: We -- well, APC
21 would absolutely support that. It's actually
22 part of my written testimony. Reimagining
23 Graduate TAP I think would be a great idea.

24 SENATOR MURRAY: Anyone else want to

1 chime in?

2 MR. HORNER: Well, our view would be,
3 you know, at some point how do you determine
4 who's in -- what programs are in and what
5 programs are out? I mean, to some extent
6 it's in the eye of the beholder.

7 We'd like to see Graduate TAP restored
8 across the board.

9 SENATOR MURRAY: Okay. That's all I
10 have. Thank you very much.

11 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Assembly.

12 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Assemblywoman
13 Hyndman.

14 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Thank you,
15 Chair Weinstein.

16 So if you were here all day you saw
17 the New York State Education Department
18 listed all the reasons why the nursing
19 licensure compact should not exist. But even
20 with the Governor's budget on the
21 initiatives, it would take five, maybe
22 six years for those nurses -- the influx
23 programs to come into the State of New York.

24 So we have a deficit. We have nurses

1 it's still at least APC, right?

2 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Okay, good.

3 Thank you.

4 A lot of your sector puts the money
5 right back in, because the facilities -- the
6 dental assistants -- are wonderful.

7 So how do you make sure you get more
8 of that information out? Especially because
9 the students were here earlier.

10 So the nursing question first, and
11 then -- I'm sorry, please.

12 MS. LIVANOS: Thank you so much for
13 your question.

14 So to answer your question about
15 adjoining states. So Vermont, Pennsylvania,
16 and New Jersey are all members of the nurse
17 licensure compact. And there is pending
18 legislation in almost every state that has
19 not yet adopted it. So there is great
20 interest.

21 Obviously the COVID-19 pandemic and
22 the workforce crisis that states are
23 experiencing has generated interest and
24 stronger interest in joining the nurse

1 licensure compact.

2 I think you're absolutely right, there
3 needs to be both short-term and long-term
4 solutions for the nursing workforce shortage.

5 One thing that's really important I
6 think to this committee and the work on
7 higher ed is that there was a survey of
8 nursing education consultants at boards of
9 nursing across the country, and they found
10 that it was -- the NLC was an important tool
11 in helping to facilitate the hiring of
12 faculty and adjunct faculty at nursing
13 programs. That it was increasing access to
14 clinical sites and decreasing barriers for
15 distance education programs to expand and
16 meet nurses where they are and students where
17 they are, maybe in rural or underserved
18 areas.

19 ASSEMBLYWOMAN HYNDMAN: Thank you.

20 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: And just to
21 answer your question about how we can better
22 educate folks about the good work that's
23 happening on APC member institutions'
24 campuses. You know, I think it's a matter of

1 bringing our students to Albany, like we
2 have. And, you know, making sure that we
3 invite you to come visit our campuses,
4 because we love to have the Legislature come
5 and visit and meet with us, so ...

6 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

7 Toby Stavisky.

8 SENATOR STAVISKY: Thank you.

9 Just real -- really very briefly.

10 First, Blair Horner, thank you for
11 what you're doing with NYPIRG. I know you go
12 back a long way with NYPIRG -- so do I, in a
13 sense. And we appreciate your comments here
14 today, and I agree with you.

15 In terms of the proprietary colleges,
16 I am delighted that the Assemblywoman just
17 mentioned Plaza, because although it's not in
18 my district, I've been there many times and
19 they really have an interesting program. And
20 they just opened -- they just did a
21 groundbreaking maybe sometime last year or
22 so, for their nursing program. So they are
23 meeting the needs of the community.

24 And we also at the same time should

1 mention Monroe, which is another good
2 proprietary school.

3 So we thank you for your sort of a
4 niche higher education. You're helping a
5 certain segment of students, and they do -- I
6 know they stay in the community.

7 And to the other panelists, we thank
8 you very much for coming.

9 Thank you.

10 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We go to
11 Assemblyman Epstein.

12 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: First I want to
13 thank you for staying so late. I really
14 appreciate it, so I'll be quick.

15 Also, President Gurnett, I just want
16 to talk to you a little more about -- because
17 we've been hearing a lot about proprietary
18 schools all day long, and you mentioned that
19 they combine the default rate for your
20 schools as well as the non-degree-granting
21 institutions.

22 So what is the, you know, five years
23 after graduation default rate, and the
24 default rate for students that don't graduate

1 from the proprietary schools that you
2 represent?

3 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: That's
4 actually -- that's actually a very good
5 point. I'm glad you raised that, because
6 there is no official five-year-cohort default
7 rate. Right now the U.S. Department of
8 Education calculates a three-year-cohort
9 default rate, and APC members do very well in
10 that.

11 But the five-year-cohort default rate
12 that was referenced in that article is really
13 a projection based on some research that was
14 done at what it would be. So it's really
15 kind of hard to say, you know, what it would
16 be.

17 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: So your schools
18 don't keep records of default rates for their
19 graduates or non-graduates?

20 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: They do. They
21 do. What I am saying is the U.S. Department
22 of Education doesn't necessarily calculate
23 that.

24 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: But you -- you

1 have 11 institutions. I assume that you have
2 that kind of data. So could you share what
3 that is?

4 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: I don't have it
5 right here with me today, but I could ask
6 them.

7 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Yeah, I would
8 appreciate that. Because honestly, if we're
9 not -- if we're mixing apples and oranges,
10 we'd like -- I mean, data helps drive the
11 whole conversation. Right?

12 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: Mm-hmm.

13 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: So if we have
14 the actual data, we can then say, okay, based
15 on the data, this is what we know.

16 You know, we've talking a lot about
17 like why students aren't finishing school,
18 why are people dropping out, why are we
19 seeing less enrollment. And, really, data
20 drives this conversation.

21 We heard a lot around hunger and
22 sexual violence and reproductive health as
23 factors in why people are no longer
24 continuing in schools. And so that I assume

1 applies not just for the public institutions
2 but also the proprietary schools as well.

3 So if you could get us data that will
4 help us understand what those issues look
5 like so we can really make informed good
6 policy decisions -- because you asked to
7 extend TAP. I don't know if that's a good or
8 a bad policy decision because I don't have
9 any data to go along with that.

10 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: Right. Right.

11 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: So until we have
12 that data, it's really hard to make good
13 informed decisions.

14 So it would be great to see your --
15 you know, you said there's three-year, but
16 five-year, and also maybe your four-year or
17 five-year graduation rates for your students,
18 how many, you know, people who apply get in,
19 and then how many people drop out and kind of
20 what issues students have with getting TAP or
21 not getting TAP.

22 We've heard earlier from HESC around
23 kind of, you know, half the people who apply
24 for TAP don't even get it. And we don't know

1 why. So we need to know why people aren't
2 getting TAP when they might be eligible and
3 what barriers that we may need put into
4 place. Maybe it's what you raised earlier
5 about people being -- in their taxes being
6 labeled as independents, and then the
7 threshold's too low. And that might be it,
8 but we just don't know until we have all of
9 the data.

10 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: Right.

11 Absolutely.

12 I will say the APC website has a
13 wealth of data. We have a lot of our
14 graduation rates listed there, and there's a
15 lot of good information on there.

16 ASSEMBLYMAN EPSTEIN: Great. Thank
17 you.

18 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: Sure.

19 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Assemblyman Ra.

20 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: Good evening. Thank
21 you guys for sticking it out here with us.

22 Regarding the Association of Private
23 Colleges -- I want to acknowledge the new
24 name -- with the part-time TAP, you know,

1 you're talking about, and I think this is
2 certainly going on across the spectrum with
3 higher education, people adapting to whatever
4 they're trying to do, coming out of the
5 pandemic.

6 So, you know, what does that look like
7 for that student who says to themselves, I
8 would like to go if I had access to part-time
9 TAP, but I don't. Are they just not seeking
10 education? Are they going somewhere else?

11 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: No, I think
12 that probably APC member institutions are
13 working with them, you know, and just -- we
14 offer, I think the latest numbers we have,
15 over \$100 million in institutional aid. So I
16 think that they are probably just getting the
17 aid they need from the institution instead,
18 or from other areas as well.

19 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: Okay, great. And I
20 know you had -- there was one other -- what
21 you talked about with, you know, you had data
22 in terms of how many students would benefit
23 from the part-time piece.

24 What about the -- this two-year

1 program gap where, just because they're at an
2 institution that only offers two-year
3 programs, that they can't access the full
4 award? Do you know how many students might
5 be able to benefit --

6 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: I think it's a
7 very small number, to be honest with you.
8 There's only two institutions that I can
9 think of. One is Island Drafting, on
10 Long Island, which has about 100 students.
11 And the other -- and this is not an APC
12 member, so I'm not sure, but Long Island
13 Business Institute I believe also offers just
14 two-year programs. Again, maybe 200 or
15 300 students.

16 So I'm glad that you asked me that
17 question, because that's an important -- it's
18 an important piece. It was a change that was
19 made I believe in 2014, and we would love to
20 see that restored.

21 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: So small financially,
22 but I'm sure would be a major difference --

23 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: Yes,
24 definitely. But it would have a huge impact.

1 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: -- to those students.

2 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: Absolutely.

3 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: I just had a
4 opportunity to go say hi to a bunch of your
5 students --

6 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: That's right.

7 ASSEMBLYMAN RA: -- outside who were
8 all from Long Island and the Bronx and
9 Westchester, so it was nice to meet them.

10 So thank you.

11 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: Great. Thanks.

12 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

13 Senate?

14 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

15 Hi. For Nicole from the National
16 Council of State Boards of Nursing.

17 So you're not a New York organization,
18 you're a national organization, right?

19 MS. LIVANOS: Correct.

20 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: So New York State
21 has historically not wanted to join this
22 compact or the doctor's compact. Can you
23 make -- can you explain to me why we've
24 historically not been interested and why

1 we're wrong?

2 (Laughter.)

3 MS. LIVANOS: How much time do you --
4 no, just kidding.

5 (Laughter.)

6 MS. LIVANOS: Thank you for your --
7 yeah, thank you for your question, Senator.

8 So I think that when we're talking
9 about what decisions were being made and what
10 opinions were being formed five years ago
11 versus today, we have to consider what we've
12 been through in the last couple of years and
13 what the COVID-19 pandemic has shown, and
14 that is that we need flexible licensure.

15 I think across the country one of the
16 first executive orders that governors passed,
17 or emergency legislation that legislatures
18 considered, was licensure mobility and
19 creating immediate flexibility for licensees,
20 knowing how important it was that they be
21 able to cross borders, whether it be
22 physically or through telehealth, since all
23 health went that way.

24 So I think that we're living in a

1 different world now. And so I think states
2 that may have been concerned, as Chair Fahy
3 mentioned, about what standards our state
4 requires versus the state next door -- that
5 some of those conversations are being heard
6 in a different light now, knowing the great
7 need and the fact that for registered nurses
8 and licensed practical nurses, licensure
9 standards across the states are very uniform.

10 Practice and scope of practice laws
11 for registered nurses and licensed practical
12 nurses are very standardized. That's
13 different from other professions that still
14 have a lot of lack of uniformity. But for
15 nursing, that is there.

16 So I think that as we're facing the
17 shortages that we are today, states across
18 the country are looking to compacts and
19 compacts are gaining more popularity. More
20 and more healthcare professionals are looking
21 to them to really meet the demands of modern
22 healthcare and also have it as a tool in the
23 toolbox for emergency responses. Heaven
24 forbid we run into something like COVID

1 again.

2 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you.

3 So you're not at the wrong hearing,
4 because it's the scope of practice in
5 licensing, but tomorrow we're going to spend
6 the whole day here at a Health Committee
7 meeting -- and I'm hearing it's starting at
8 10:00 a.m., not 9:30 a.m., just so everybody
9 knows that.

10 And I'm going to look for someone
11 tomorrow to ask that same question: What's
12 changed, and why aren't we doing this now, or
13 why should we? So thank you for your
14 response.

15 MS. LIVANOS: Thank you.

16 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: We go to
17 Assemblywoman Simon.

18 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Thank you.

19 I have a couple of questions. One is,
20 you know, we've had a nursing shortage for a
21 long time. It's a national shortage. So the
22 compact issue and whether and how that really
23 helps the shortage at all is still a big
24 question to me, so I'd like to have that

1 addressed.

2 But also on the proprietary schools --
3 you know, a number of them are in my district
4 in downtown Brooklyn, right, and ASA is one
5 of those. And one of the questions I have is
6 ASA, for example, originally started
7 experiencing a lot of difficulty because the
8 head of the ASA was accused of multiple
9 sexual assault violations, was cashiered out,
10 and then came back -- because these are
11 family-owned institutions, very often.

12 So how is it that your organization is
13 able to sort of monitor that? Because it
14 wasn't necessarily an education-quality
15 issue, as far as we know. It wasn't
16 necessarily a debt issue, as far as we know.
17 It was bad behavior.

18 So the two of those questions, you
19 can -- however you take it, whichever one.

20 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: Go ahead.

21 MS. LIVANOS: Okay. Thank you so much
22 for your question.

23 So I would say that how the compact
24 can impact the nursing workforce shortage, if

1 we can look to the 39 member jurisdictions
2 that are part of the compact today, and the
3 fact that immediately upon COVID hitting they
4 had 34 states where they could pull nurses
5 and recruit nurses forward to deal with what
6 I would call acute emergencies, right --
7 hotspots that were developing across the
8 country. They immediately could pull from
9 this work force. That's during times of
10 emergency.

11 I think what we're seeing now, too, is
12 that technology is moving in the direction of
13 where patients are demanding care where they
14 are. They're more and more demanding, you
15 know, follow-up care via telehealth. And so
16 I think that there's an opportunity to help
17 the workforce reach more patients, and that
18 includes calling on nurses that are both
19 in-state as well as out-of-state to reach
20 New York patients as well.

21 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Thank you.

22 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: Okay, so I
23 would say -- first of all, I just would like
24 to point out that ASA is not now nor has it

1 ever been a member of APC, just to make sure
2 that that's clear.

3 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Thank you. I
4 understand. I appreciate you mentioning
5 that.

6 MS. STELLING-GURNETT: Yes, just to be
7 clear.

8 And I would say that, you know, it's a
9 very small community, the institutions of
10 higher ed across the sectors, all sectors.
11 And we all work together very closely, and
12 when there are issues that come up, obviously
13 we're very concerned.

14 We worked very closely with the State
15 Ed Department. We worked very closely with
16 Middle States, ASA's accreditor. We worked
17 very closely with the U.S. Department of
18 Education as well, expressing our concerns
19 and letting them know what we're hearing and
20 seeing in the field, from students that are
21 coming to our institutions to, you know,
22 faculty or other staff members that wanted to
23 move to a different institution.

24 So, you know, it's very interesting.

1 We expressed our concerns to, them and we're
2 working very closely with them to make sure
3 the students are protected and have a smooth
4 transition to wherever they choose to go.

5 ASSEMBLYWOMAN SIMON: Thank you.

6 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: Thank you.

7 Any other Senators?

8 SENATOR STAVISKY: We're the only two
9 left.

10 (Laughter.)

11 SENATOR STAVISKY: Three, I'm
12 sorry --

13 (Laughter.)

14 CHAIRWOMAN WEINSTEIN: It's around
15 that time we get a little giddy.

16 So thank you for being here to present
17 testimony. Thank you for the work you do
18 at -- in the community.

19 And this will be concluding the
20 Higher Education hearing. A reminder that
21 tomorrow at 10:00 a.m. we will be starting
22 the Health Committee hearing, the Health
23 hearing. That's a change from what was
24 published. So it will be 10:00 a.m. for the

1 Health hearing, here in this room.

2 Thank you again for being here, and
3 this officially concludes the Higher
4 Education budget hearing.

5 CHAIRWOMAN KRUEGER: Thank you very
6 much.

7 (Whereupon, the budget hearing
8 concluded at 6:46 p.m.)

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