



ADIRONDACK REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
WARREN COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



April 30, 2020

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand
478 Russell
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Elise M. Stefanik
318 Cannon Office Building
Washington DC 20515

Re: Federal Funding for NY State Community Colleges

Dear Senator Schumer, Senator Gillibrand and Congresswoman Stefanik,

We are writing to you urgently on behalf of SUNY Adirondack and all the community colleges of the State University of New York.

Please advocate for federal relief to New York State, the hardest hit by the COVID-19 virus. In the absence of such federal relief, New York State will need to make severe budget adjustments and community colleges are disproportionately in line for drastic reductions in state aid. The 2020-2021 budget already included a \$26 million reduction in state aid to community colleges. Recent information indicates future reductions could be as high as 50%. For SUNY Adirondack alone, the losses could add up to over \$4 million. The college, as well as all NY community colleges, cannot sustain these types of cuts without drastically reducing its courses and services to students.

This is devastating news to the colleges who serve the largest number of under resourced students. We must be a key partner in economic recovery. We cannot do that under funding cuts of this magnitude. Please consider this as the next federal stimulus package is being debated at the federal level and help keep New York whole for the good of the state and its communities.

Community colleges are the backbone of workforce development. We also educate and employ locally. And we have been a key partner in responding to COVID-19. College faculty and staff quickly transformed to a remote environment to help students complete the semester they started and have committed countless hours assisting students, knowing that many lacked the technology and resources to be successful amidst a difficult health crisis. Community colleges have experience in remote instruction and will remain an important asset to their communities to promote education momentum.

We hope we can count on you to help SUNY's community colleges to continue to be both an anchor for regional economic development, and a beacon for fulfilling the dreams of our students.

Sincerely,

Kristine Duffy, Ed.D.
President
SUNY Adirondack

Frank Thomas
Chairman
Warren County, NY
Board of Supervisors

Samuel J. Hall
Chairman
Washington County, NY
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