

Dear Senate Colleagues ,

I asked Chancellor Clark to include me on a special budget conference call with the campus Presidents of SUNY this morning from 10:30am to Noon. The specifics of the call are confidential , but I wish to share the general strategies and time line with you .

The agenda started with reports from several senior SUNY officials about the condition of the SUNY budget to date . The State of New York is facing a multi-billion dollar budget deficit , so the State is planning actions to deal with the shortfall . Two different budget actions are proposed for SUNY:

1) a \$38.7 million cut to the General Fund (negotiated during the budget process .)

2) a second administratively imposed , by the Dept.of Budget , 3.35% cut from funds which do NOT come from State sources .

These are operating funds , collected by the campuses , for tuition , room and board , student fees (health care or transportation),income earned from SUNY hospitals , etc. The DOB has directed the campuses to hold back funds in excess of the 3.35 % spending limit for services rendered to students and patients . These State Operating Funds are generally included in the budget as " pass-through " funds . These are not taxpayer funds , therefore , spending limitations do NOT result in cash savings for the State , but these limitations will result in reduction of services to patients and students . Therefore , if not mitigated , this policy will result in a reduction in student services and patient care . These programs , for the most part , are self-financed and generally designed to break even . If this policy is sustained , students and patients will be denied services / programs . In a worse case scenario colleges may have to close programs and hospitals may have to close service departments . We all must carefully monitor all of these budget issues as they mature over the next days/ weeks .

During the conference call with the Presidents , I strongly requested that all Presidents , " fully engage their Faculty Governance bodies , including the State-wide University Faculty Senators " , so that the faculty/ staff understand the full impact of both budget adjustments to each campuses operation . For those campuses with university hospitals , the shortfall for all hospitals may exceed \$700 million . Devastating numbers to say the least . The working number , estimated to be low , is \$109 million for the 3.35% DOB action . I offer this number only because you may see it in another document , and I don't want you to be confused .

The Chancellor and his top administrative team has planned a two-phase strategy to address these budget issues with the Governor , DOB and the Legislature . Phase I will be a top level initiative , senior administration efforts to educate the powers that be about the impact of the proposed cuts to SUNY and ,hopefully , get those cuts reversed , to some degree . At the same time the Chancellor has asked the campus presidents to organize the campus resources and contact local legislators about the impact of the proposed budget cuts to the specific campuses . Faculty Governance will assist with any and all actions deemed important by the collective wisdom of the campus community . (UUP and the other unions are beginning their " frontal attack " as we speak , and many of our colleagues will engage their agenda and timeline .) Visits and letters / faxes and phone calls to the Governor and Legislators are all worthy projects , so I encourage our colleagues to engage in these activities . This is the least our colleagues can do , given the hard work and great sacrifices being made by our union-active
