

**Resolution of the University Faculty Senate Executive Committee on the
Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act
March 31, 2010**

Whereas state support for the SUNY state-operated campuses has been cut by \$424 million over the past three years and the 2010-2011 Executive Budget recommends an additional reduction of more than \$170 million; and

Whereas these reductions threaten SUNY's ability to offer its students an affordable education of the highest quality; and

Whereas a recent New York State budget gap was partially closed by a tuition increase, 90% of which was kept by the State Treasury; and

Whereas the projected New York State budget deficit is \$9 billion in the next year, due to the slow pace of economic recovery and the cessation of federal stimulus funds; and

Whereas the proposed New York State Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act, along with the accompanying Comprehensive Tuition Policy and the Comprehensive Asset Management Policy

- depoliticize tuition rates by moving the authorizing power from New York State to the State University Board of Trustees and moving the tuition income "off-budget," and
- create an equitable and rational tuition policy through the General Tuition Rate, which would yield modest and predictable tuition increases, as opposed to the large sudden increases designed to help close a budget gap for New York State, and
- enable the University to undertake land leases without special legislation for projects not in conflict with campus missions, to enter joint ventures and public/private partnerships, and to eliminate burdensome and redundant pre-approval of Construction Fund contracts; and
- provide protection from liability for students participating in clinical internships related to their field of study, facilitate hospital participation in joint ventures and managed care to provide health care related services, and eliminate burdensome and duplicative pre-approval of SUNY hospital contracts, including those involving real property transactions, and
- fund SUNY-Aid with a portion of the expected tuition increase to reduce the burden of these increases on economically disadvantaged students, and
- facilitate the speedy and cost-effective purchase of materials and services

Therefore, be it resolved that the University Faculty Senate's Executive Committee endorses the principles of the Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act, with the additional consideration that that the Executive Committee asks the Chancellor and her staff to address five outstanding issues that have created special concern:

- The need to define Special Tuition Rate more precisely and provide a cap;

- The need to specify the inclusion of faculty governance in the campus decision-making processes that will produce recommendations for both tuition rates and/or public-private partnerships or any associated land leases;
- The need to ensure that the oversight of public-private partnerships require adherence to all relevant environmental laws and to 'best environmental practices;'
- The need to ensure that all rights and benefits of collective bargaining in the current labor contracts be extended to all future negotiated labor contracts; and,
- The need for a commitment on the part of New York State to a future level of funding that would constitute a continuing "maintenance of effort."

Approved March 31, 2010