

May 14, 2013

COMMUNITY ENRICHMENT COMMITTEE
REPORT NO. 9

ALL MEMBERS PRESENT, EXCEPT LEGISLATOR LORIGO.
CHAIR GRANT PRESENT AS EX-OFFICIO MEMBER.

1. INTRO 9-3 (2013)
MARINELLI AS AMENDED
WHEREAS, community colleges have emerged as one of the most important resources in Western New York for preparing our region’s 21st century workforce by developing new, innovative and technologically advanced job training/retraining, degree and certificate programs; and

WHEREAS, New York State Education Law Article 126 provides the methodology for funding community colleges under the State University of New York; and

WHEREAS, the State of New York is required – under State Education Law – to assist in the financing of community college tuition costs; and

WHEREAS, over the course of time, New York State has reduced the amount of state aid contributions as the result of state fiscal challenges and, for some counties, the state aid share does not exceed 18 percent of the community college operating budget; and

WHEREAS, in State fiscal year 2007-08, the State Budget supported student base aid for SUNY and CUNY community colleges per full time student at \$2,675, yet the State fiscal year 2012-13 state budget included final base operating aid funding for community colleges at \$2,272 per full time student, representing a 15 percent reduction from prior state aid levels, not accounting for inflationary costs; and

WHEREAS, the final Budget agreement for 2013-14 added \$54 million for higher education funding above the Governor’s proposal, with less than one-half of the additional funding (\$24 million) targeted to increase community college FTE state base aid – an increase of \$150 per FTE (for a total amount of \$2,422 per full time student); and

WHEREAS, the 2013-14 State Budget is moving final base operating aid in the right direction, however, the cumulative reduction in state aid perpetuates New York State’s actions of imposing increasingly higher costs on county taxpayers and students in a manner that contradicts the intent of State Education Law; and

WHEREAS, New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC) has called on the Governor and State Legislature to gradually restore community college base operating aid to the levels envisioned under

New York State Education Law in order to maintain academic excellence and affordability at our community colleges; and

WHEREAS, Erie County stands with its fellow counties in New York State that host a community college in asking that the chronic under-funding of base operating aid be resolved in a strategic manner for the benefit of the New York State economy; and

WHEREAS, in November 2011, the SUNY Board of Trustees included in the 2012-13 budget request to the Governor a five-year rational state aid policy calling for annual increases of \$205 per year; and

WHEREAS, Erie Community College received \$150 in 2012-13, thereby the SUNY request for 2013-14 was \$260 (\$205 for 2nd year of the five-year plan including the \$55 shortfall in the amount requested and received in 2012-13); and

WHEREAS, the request was called a rational state aid policy after the four-year SUNY schools were provided with a rational tuition policy of a \$300 increase per year for five years.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Erie County Legislature voice its strong support for the planned and gradual restoration of base operating aid to community colleges in New York State in accordance with New York State Education Law; and be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution be conveyed to Governor Andrew Cuomo, Speaker of the Assembly Sheldon Silver, Leader of the Republican Conference of the New York State Senate Dean Skelos, Leader of the Independent Democrat Conference of the New York State Senate Jeff Klein, ECC President Jack Quinn and all others deemed necessary and proper.

(5-0)

LYNN M. MARINELLI
CHAIR