



June 10, 2019

Memorandum of Opposition

A.8220 (Walczyk)/ S.2908 (Griffo)

The Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities (CICU) opposes A.8220/ S.2908 which would allow SUNY Potsdam to lower tuition rates for out-of-state students at a time when resident tuition has risen steadily. New York already offers one of the most heavily subsidized, and lowest, non-resident tuitions of any public university system in the country.¹

CICU represents more than 100 private, not-for-profit colleges and universities in New York State who educate almost 500,000 students annually. Recent policy changes at the state level, including the introduction of free tuition at SUNY and CUNY for income eligible families, present significant recruitment challenges for many private, not-for-profit colleges who draw upon the pool of New York students. These same schools also recruit from bordering states. By increasing the subsidy for out-of-state students to entice them to New York's public colleges, this legislation creates yet another barrier to recruitment at New York's private colleges. Private colleges are major economic drivers throughout the state, responsible for \$88.8 billion in economic activity and more than 400,000 jobs, but if they are to remain so, caution must be taken not to adopt policies that promote an increasingly unlevel playing field. Efforts to bolster enrollment at SUNY campuses should not come at the expense of taxpayers or private colleges that do not have the advantage of taxpayer subsidies to offer to out-of-state students.

One way that legislators can help to boost enrollment at the State's public and private college campuses is to increase financial aid through the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP). This directly assists New Yorkers rather than out-of-state students and helps to maintain a balanced higher education ecosystem where New York college bound students are incentivized to remain in the state at the college that best meets their needs.

For these reasons the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities opposes this legislation.

¹ <https://trends.collegeboard.org/college-pricing/figures-tables/2018-19-state-tuition-and-fees-public-four-year-institutions-state-and-five-year-percentage>