



## NEWS RELEASE

**For more information:**

Kevin Stump, Higher Education Program Coordinator  
[Kstump@nypirg.org](mailto:Kstump@nypirg.org) or 212-349-6460 x1123

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***“GROUND HOG’S DAY BUDGET” KEEPS STUDENTS STRUGGLING  
STILL NO PLAN TO MAKE COLLEGE MORE AFFORDABLE FOR STUDENTS;  
DREAM ACT LEFT OUT OF BUDGET***

New York, New York – Another budget year has gone by and the Governor and the New York State Legislature have done little to help offset the rising costs associated with going to college.

“Students across the state are disappointed that the Senate and the Governor did not join the Assembly in putting the New York State DREAM Act (S.2378/A.2597) in this year’s budget,” said Kathleen Jordan, chair of NYPIRG’s Board of Directors and a student at Brooklyn College. “NYPIRG stands in solidarity with the Latino Senators who voted against the budget bill because it did not include funding for the New York State DREAM Act. We remain hopeful that the Governor and the Senate will work to pass this common-sense initiative later this session,” said Jordan.

“While we are pleased that the budget includes an additional \$150/FTE in Base Aid for community colleges, these institutions are still receiving \$443/FTE less (inflation adjusted) in Base Aid than they did in 2008-09,” said Kevin Stump, NYPIRG’s Higher Education Program Coordinator. “We need serious public investment to get our community colleges on a sustainable path and meet the growing demands we are placing on these institutions,” Stump said.

“I am glad the final budget did not further cut general funding, but I am concerned that it is simply not enough to help us recover from years of budget cuts. With inflation and other mandatory cost increases, flat funding is essentially a cut,” said Jordan. “The years of public disinvestment have triggered tuition hikes, which have consequently driven student loan debt to an all time high. This perfect storm of decreased funding, increased costs, and more debt must be addressed by updating and fixing the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) to work for all New Yorkers,” said Jordan.

“With another round of Grant Challenge funding for SUNY and now for CUNY, we implore the legislature to strengthen the conflict of interest provision included in the NY SUNY 2020 law to adequately protect faculty and students from private sector interests that could potentially threaten academic integrity and violate university freedoms,” said Stump.

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