



# NEWS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release:**  
Friday, April 1, 2016

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**SUNY & CUNY STUDENTS WIN MAJOR VICTORY  
AGAINST TUITION HIKES;  
FINAL BUDGET DEAL GIVES PUBLIC COLLEGE STUDENTS A BREAK AFTER 5  
STRAIGHT YEARS OF TUITION HIKES;  
STATE NEEDS TO BOOST ITS SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC UNIVERSITY SYSTEMS, URGES  
PASSAGE OF “MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT” LEGISLATION**

Freezing tuition at SUNY and CUNY is a major victory for students and their families. We thank the Governor, Assembly and the Senate for providing this critical relief after five years of consecutive tuition hikes. Unfortunately, that decision was not matched with additional significant state support. The much-needed tuition freeze reprieve is only a half measure without increased state support for the State University and City University of New York systems. We urge that the legislature once again take up the “maintenance of effort” legislation.

**FACTS:**

The so-called “rational tuition” policy included in the SUNY 2020 law passed in 2011 has jacked-up the cost of tuition at public colleges by over 30%.<sup>1</sup> As seen below,<sup>2</sup> at the same time, State funding has remained largely flat, while the costs to maintain SUNY and CUNY have increased.<sup>3</sup> The State has essentially made up the difference using tuition dollars.

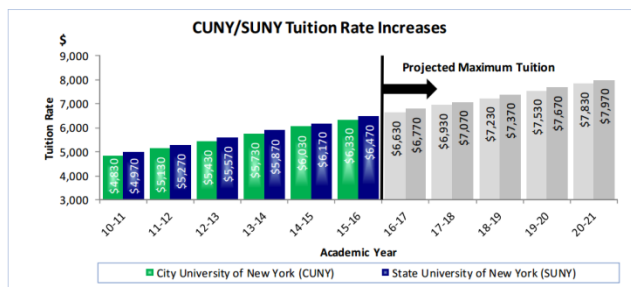
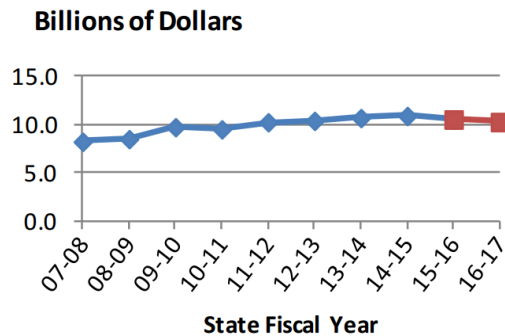


Figure 3



<sup>1</sup> SUNY tuition and fees for 2015-2016 are \$6,470 tuition. The so-called “rational tuition” policy allowed for \$300 annual increases for 5 years, or a total of \$1,500 by the time the law expires in July, 2016. Thus, SUNY tuition has increased **30%** since the plan went into place. See: <http://www.suny.edu/smartrack/tuition-and-fees/>. Calculations performed by NYPIRG.

<sup>2</sup> Tuition increase chart is from the Assembly “Yellow Book.” While the chart showing state support over time is from the Senate’s “White Book.”

<sup>3</sup> Inflation over the last five years total **5.4%**. No increases in support are essentially reductions in inflation-adjusted dollars (see: <http://www.usinflationcalculator.com/>).