

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** ID-6237, **Version:** 1

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**Narrative of Resolution:**

Urging the development of an equitable county chargeback formula and take over health insurance for community colleges

**If Resolution requires expenditure of County Funds, provide the following information:**

**Amount to be authorized by Resolution:** N/A

**Are funds already budgeted?** Choose an item.

**Specify Compliance with Procurement Procedures:**

**RESOLUTION INTRODUCED BY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CALLING ON THE GOVERNOR AND LEGISLATURE TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY COLLEGES, URGING THEM TO DEVELOP AN EQUITABLE COUNTY CHARGEBACK FORMULA, AND URGING THEM TO TAKE OVER THE COST OF HEALTH INSURANCE FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES AS THEY DO FOR FOUR YEAR SUNY SCHOOLS**

**WHEREAS**, under state law, funding for community colleges is to be provided through state aid, a county sponsor contribution, and student tuition and fees; and

**WHEREAS**, the establishment and continued operation of a statewide community college system was based on an ongoing state aid funding commitment of at least one third, and up to 40 percent, of community college operating costs; and

**WHEREAS**, the state funding amount has declined over the years and is now below their historic one-third commitment, and far short of 40 percent; and

**WHEREAS**, this year the Executive State Budget proposes to maintain a funding floor for community colleges at 100 percent of prior year funding, up from the 98 percent floor enacted in FY 2022; and

**WHEREAS**, without this funding floor, community colleges would face a \$138 million (22 percent) loss in formula aid due to enrollment declines; and

**WHEREAS**, the Governor's proposal is contingent to the following language: "... provided further that up to 20 percent of the amount of aid authorized pursuant to this appropriation shall be payable subject to a plan developed by the State University of New York and approved by the director of the budget with actions necessary for community colleges to undertake in order to operate without reliance on the base aid funding floor in future years;" and

**WHEREAS**, if the Governor's proposed budget and proposal to hold back needed operating funds remains unchanged, our community colleges will lose millions of dollars in base State Aid, as well as even more funding if 20 percent of the aid was held for a period of time or indefinitely; and

**WHEREAS**, a significant portion of the operating cost for community colleges is related to the cost of health insurance, and

**WHEREAS**, the Sullivan County Legislature requests that the State pay for community college health insurance costs as they do for the four-year SUNY schools; and

**WHEREAS**, many community colleges are at a crossroads because they are facing a decade of declining enrollment due to overall state population loss and a dramatic decline in K-12 students, more competition from 4-year schools due to special tuition aid provided by the state, forcing them to ask county sponsors and students to pay more, with county chargebacks rising at an unsustainable pace.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, the Sullivan County Legislature applauds the Governor for proposing to implement a funding floor for community colleges; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Sullivan County Legislature does not support the governor's budget language that allows the state to defer passing through 20 percent of the base funding until SUNY and the Division of Budget develop plans that require community colleges to find ways to maintain operations without the 100 percent spending floor in future years as it could severely undermine current year operations; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, SUNY should continue to work closely with community colleges to develop innovative solutions to attract and support students during these challenging times, such as providing cybersecurity curriculum, cannabis management, and specific regional industry workforce development; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Sullivan County Legislature calls on the State University of New York (SUNY) to develop a more equitable funding methodology for community college chargebacks for counties sending residents to colleges outside of their border; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Sullivan County Legislature calls on the New York State Legislature to include funding in the State budget to take over the cost of health insurance costs at all community colleges; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Clerk to the Sullivan County Legislature shall forward copies of this resolution to Governor Kathy Hochul, the New York State Association of Counties and all others deemed necessary and proper.