

July 3, 2025

Dear Members of the New York State Conference of the U.S. House,

As leaders of faculty, administrative, and trustee governance organizations for the State University of New York (SUNY), we urge you to **vote NO** on the so-called “One Big Beautiful Bill Act” (or federal budget reconciliation “megabill”) in its entirety. This sweeping legislation is deeply flawed—and nowhere more dangerous than in its higher education provisions.

This bill attacks opportunity. It slashes access to Pell Grants, eliminates subsidized loans, and imposes rigid borrowing caps that would force working-class students to abandon dreams of becoming doctors, teachers, engineers, and public servants. It punishes students for earning scholarships and penalizes those who attend college part-time while balancing jobs or caregiving responsibilities.

It rewards exclusion over access. By forcing colleges to repay student debt, the bill incentivizes schools to avoid enrolling high-need students—the very people public institutions are meant to serve. At the same time, it guts protections that shield students from fraud and predatory institutions.

It undermines public colleges that power the American dream. In New York, SUNY’s 64 campuses—including 30 community colleges—serve over a million students from every corner of the state. The proposed changes would destabilize these institutions and hurt the students and families who rely on them to build better lives.

This bill doesn’t fix a broken system—it breaks what still works. And it does so at the expense of students, families, and the workforce of tomorrow.

Please vote no on the One Big Beautiful Bill Act. Public higher education isn’t the problem. It’s one of the last engines of opportunity we’ve got. Don’t shut it down.

Respectfully,

Bruce Simon
President, SUNY University Faculty Senate
Member, SUNY Board of Trustees

Candice Vacin
President, SUNY Faculty Council of Community Colleges
Member, SUNY Board of Trustees

Keith Landa
Immediate Past President, SUNY University Faculty Senate (2021-2025)
Past member, SUNY Board of Trustees (2021-2025)
Secretary, National Council of Faculty Senates

Christy Woods
Past President, SUNY Faculty Council of Community Colleges (2019-2024)
Past member, SUNY Board of Trustees (2019-2024)

Gwen Kay
Past President, SUNY University Faculty Senate (2017-2021)
Past member, SUNY Board of Trustees (2017-2021)
Immediate Past President, National Council of Faculty Senates (2021-2025)

Nina Tamrowski
Past President, SUNY Faculty Council of Community Colleges (2015-2019)
Past member, SUNY Board of Trustees (2015-2019)

Peter Knuepfer
Past President, SUNY University Faculty Senate (2013-2017)
Past member, SUNY Board of Trustees (2013-2017)

Tina Good
Past President, SUNY Faculty Council of Community Colleges (2009-2015)
Past member, SUNY Board of Trustees (2011-2015)

George W. Cushman
Trustee, Finger Lakes Community College
Chairman, New York Community College Trustees (NYCCT)

Kristine Young
President, SUNY Orange
President, New York Community College Association of Presidents (NYCCAP)