Capital Support for the Schuyler Building - $20 Million

The University at Albany is seeking $20 million in capital funding to begin renovating the Schuyler Building into the new home of the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences (CEAS). As part of UAlbany’s largest academic expansion in 50 years, CEAS leverages our existing strengths in computer science, mathematics, and physics. The State Education Department validated these efforts in 2016 when it approved our B.S. in computer engineering, the first of several undergraduate and graduate engineering programs in development. This innovative new college represents a critical growth area for the University, providing high-quality degree programs that are in high demand with students, parents and employers.

Central to the design and strategy of CEAS is its location on our Downtown Campus in a renovated and modernized Schuyler Building. The stately but vacant Classical Revival building served as Albany High School from 1913 to 1974. Situated in a walkable, mixed-use historic neighborhood, CEAS will establish new public, private and educational partnerships. UAlbany is also partnering with the city of Albany and diverse community stakeholders to enhance the corridor between the Downtown Campus on North Lake Avenue and Alumni Quad on Partridge Street, creating new avenues for community engagement, neighborhood revitalization and economic development.

The state-of-the-art facility will contain 127,000 square feet of classroom, research and office space, as well as tinker space that’s primed for innovators and entrepreneurs to collaborate to turn big ideas into reality.

NYSTAR Center of Excellence in Atmospheric and Environmental Prediction and Innovation - $500,000

The Executive Budget eliminates $250,000 in funding for the NYSTAR Center of Excellence in Atmospheric and Environmental Prediction and Innovation at the University at Albany, which was established three years ago. The Center continues to support weather-business growth by leveraging the University’s scientific expertise and facilities to partner with businesses and solve business problems. For example, the Center is assisting Central Hudson Gas & Electric by developing a weather-based power outage prediction tool that, when complete, will reduce labor costs by hundreds of thousands of dollars every year. The Center is also a partner with ConEd in developing a high-impact wind forecast that will help predict wind-based power outages. UAlbany is advocating for the restoration of last year’s funding level and seeking additional State support of $250,000 for a total of $500,000. This will continue to grow our Center to eventually reach parity with the other 10 Centers of Excellence across the state, each of which is funded at $1 million.
SUNY's budget priorities are focused on areas where an investment of limited Direct State Tax support will have the maximum societal and economic return to the State of New York, all while assisting with our pressing financial needs.

Critical Maintenance Funding and Energy Retrofits for SUNY - $880 Million

The Executive Budget recommends $350 million in critical maintenance funding, which is a reduction of $200 million from the $550 million that was provided in last year’s Enacted Budget. Of the $350 million, $153.4 million is allocated for State-operated campuses (UAlbany's share is $9.685 million, up from $9.447 million) and $196.6 million in a lump sum for priority critical maintenance projects (UAlbany received $6.159 million last year for a total of $15.6 million in total SUNY capital). Nearly three quarters of the facilities at UAlbany are more than 40 years old with some over 100 years old. The University supports SUNY’s request for a restoration of $200 million in critical maintenance funding, as well as an additional $250 million in flexible capital funding, for a total of $800 million for the State-operated campuses, ensuring the safety and health of students, faculty and staff in the buildings owned and operated by SUNY, and allowing for new construction projects as warranted. Additionally, we support the request for $80 million in funding to create sustainable/net-zero buildings through retrofits to be made with critical maintenance projects reducing energy consumption and costs.

Educational Opportunity Program (EOP)

The Executive Budget eliminates last year’s $5.4 million legislative add for a total funding level of $26.8 million for EOP. Increased funding has enabled UAlbany to offer 50 additional incoming freshmen spots in the EOP program this past summer, for a total of 250, out of a pool of 6,000 applicants. The six-year graduation rate of 72% for our EOP students exceeds the national average of 58% at public institutions. UAlbany supports SUNY’s request to restore $5.4 million to EOP to prevent a decline in enrollment of 765 students in fall 2018, and a $500 decrease in the direct aid awards to the over 10,000 students in the program System-wide.

DREAM Act

The Executive Budget again supports the implementation of the DREAM Act and expands eligibility for the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) and the Excelsior Scholarship Program to all New York State residents regardless of lawful federal immigration status. We stand with SUNY in supporting the enactment of the DREAM Act.

Small Business Development Centers (SBDC)

UAlbany supports SUNY’s request that New York State investment for small businesses continues by restoring $1.5 million to the SBDC program and add $550,000 to provide a match for potential funding from the federal government. [Placeholder for impact to UAlbany]

Contract Responsibilities

Once the United University Professions contract is settled, SUNY looks forward to working with the Legislature and the Governor to mitigate the cost to SUNY of the collective bargaining increases. Without State support, SUNY campuses’ ability to grow programs and make other investments in fulfilling our academic mission and student success is restricted. UAlbany would be adversely impacted by $_ million.