

Signatories for CUNY Faculty Letter to Gov. Cuomo

Dear Governor Cuomo,

We write as proud CUNY professors deeply concerned about the profound New York State budget cuts slated to target CUNY.

Since you became governor in 2011, you have consistently balanced the budget without adequate concern for the educational needs of our students. State aid to CUNY, adjusted for inflation, has declined by nearly 5 percent during your tenure, though the state's gross domestic product has increased. New York's Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) no longer covers the full cost of tuition--making the CUNY colleges bridge the difference. The TAP GAP totaled \$151 million this year.

Now we are in a crucial moment. In your daily press conferences, you regularly praise the heroes of New York--medical workers, grocery store checkers, mail carriers, delivery workers, gas station attendants, MTA drivers, DOE food service providers, keeping the city and the state functioning in these very scary days. Many of these heroes are our students and their parents. Now is the time to honor their service and protect and enhance their education, strengthening New York's economy in the process.

Further cuts to CUNY would be educationally damaging, economically misguided, and cruel. And they do not have to happen. Now is the time to act boldly and raise revenue by taxing the wealthy, like State Senator Stavisky's SHARE Act--and by using CARES ACT provisions through which the Federal Reserve could buy debt from states and municipalities. Acting boldly to fund CUNY is essential to safeguard our students' dreams and the tremendous avenue of social mobility that CUNY has long represented. In a national survey: 9 of the top 20 colleges in the nation providing social mobility to students are CUNY colleges.

During the Great Depression, local, state, and federal policymakers refused to cut and invested instead, building three new CUNY campuses -- Queens College, Brooklyn College, and Hunter College in the Bronx--a tremendous educational and economic investment that has served the state well. As President Franklin Roosevelt explained at the 1936 dedication of Brooklyn College: "We not only



have to put to work many thousands of good people who needed work; but we are also improving the educational facilities of this great Borough, not just today but for generations to come.” History has not been kind to Roosevelt's predecessor Herbert Hoover, who favored the path of cuts and complacency.

We call on you to make no budget cuts to CUNY this year, to close the TAP gap, to commit funds to protect all current full-time and part-time faculty jobs as well as restore the nearly one thousand full-time faculty lines that have been lost through cuts over the past decade, and to increase CUNY's capital budget to pay for long-needed repairs and green retro-fit our crumbling campuses.

We ask you to change course and commit to funding the public higher education our heroes—and our state— deserve.

Blanche Wiesen Cook, Distinguished Professor of History and Women's Studies, John Jay College and the CUNY Graduate Center

Jeanne Theoharis, Distinguished Professor of Political Science, Brooklyn College

Alexandra Juhasz, Distinguished Professor Film, Brooklyn College

Sarah Schulman, Distinguished Professor of English, College of Staten Island

Celina Su, Professor of Political Science, Brooklyn College and Marilyn J. Gittell Endowed Chair in Urban Studies, CUNY Graduate Center

Ben Lerner, Distinguished Professor of English, Brooklyn College

Stephen Steinberg, Distinguished Professor of Urban Studies, CUNY Graduate Center

Herman L. Bennett, Professor of History, PhD Program in History, The Graduate Center

Tyehimba Jess, Distinguished Professor of English, College of Staten Island

Dagmar Herzog, Distinguished Professor of History, CUNY Graduate Center

Susan Saegert, Professor of Psychology The Graduate Center CUNY

Cindi Katz, Professor of Geography/Earth and Environmental Sciences, The Graduate Center

Alyson Cole, Professor of Political Science, Queens College & the Graduate Center

Eric Lott, Distinguished Professor, English and American Studies, The Graduate Center

Alan Aja, Associate Professor, Puerto Rican & Latino Studies, Brooklyn College

Joseph Entin, Professor of English and American Studies, Brooklyn College

Karen Miller, Professor, Social Science Dept., LaGuardia Community College

Anna Stetsenko, Professor of Psychology and Urban Education, The Graduate Center CUNY

Kandice Chuh, Professor of English, American Studies and Critical Social Psychology, CUNY Graduate Center



For the rest of the names, see here:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1FWf8QGNsx5Z4bZ4uF3WqNraskjL0k9hlzGosBbNoYs/edit?usp=sharing>



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Name: (By putting my name below, I understand that this letter will be sent to Governor Cuomo, but also forwarded to the Chancellor and college presidents and publicized to the media)

Your answer

Title (Please include title, department and college, i.e. Professor of Linguistics, Hunter College):

Your answer

Email address:

Your answer

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