

**Hilbert College Board of Trustees Resolution**  
**on**  
**Expansion of the Tuition Assistance Program in Lieu of:**

**Excelsior Scholarships/Free Tuition at State University of New York (SUNY) and City  
University of New York (CUNY) Institutions**  
**and**  
**Price Controls at Independent Colleges and Universities Through State-Imposed  
Tuition Setting and Resulting Elimination of TAP and Bundy Aid**

**WHEREAS**, New York's compact for higher education has created and maintained the largest and most diverse array of higher education institutions that is the envy of the world and which reflects a comprehensive public-private partnership that has successfully existed since the creation of our state's first private, non-profit institution of higher education in 1794, the creation in 1948 and expansion of the State University system (SUNY) in the 1960s, and the assumption of a state role in the City University system (CUNY) in the 1970s, and

**WHEREAS**, it has been the long standing policy of the State, through its Tuition Assistance Program (TAP), to treat all students in need of financial assistance equally whether they choose to attend private, not for profit colleges and universities or public institutions, and

**WHEREAS**, the Executive Budget's proposal to provide additional aid in the form of free tuition to SUNY and CUNY would reverse the policy, and

**WHEREAS**, we strongly believe, as Trustees who have the fiduciary responsibility for the continued wellbeing of Hilbert College, who seek through all means at our disposal to avoid tuition increases in order to remain competitive and attract the most qualified students to our institution, that any effort by the state to provide additional supplemental financial aid must be fashioned in a way that treats all New Yorkers of similar circumstance the same, regardless of whether they choose to attend our institution or a SUNY or CUNY campus, for equitable treatment has been the longstanding policy of the state, in fairness to the nearly 300,000 New York students for whom private higher education has long provided the best opportunity for academic and career success, and

**WHEREAS**, this fair and equitable student aid policy should not be abandoned, for if our students fit the same financial profile as those of the SUNY or CUNY students that would be benefited by the Executive Budget's proposals, they should be treated the same for New York State to remain a stellar example of public/private partnership, representing fairness and equity at its best; and

**WHEREAS**, this assures that these students can use their state financial aid at the in-state college of their choice, so that our state provides the "final mile" that all students deserve when making their college selection, and

**WHEREAS**, the Executive Budget also proposes that any private, non-profit college or university in New York State that raises tuition and fee rates above an arbitrary, government-regulated threshold would see its Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) eligibility and Direct Institutional "Bundy" Aid eliminated, and

**WHEREAS**, this would harm students of modest means who benefit from the financial aid made possible by TAP, Bundy Aid and tuition revenue, for these financial supports enable non-profit institutions to provide student aid, maintain diversity, and support educational quality, career preparation, state-of-the-art learning technologies and facilities, and

**WHEREAS**, New York's Independent Sector of higher education collectively provides \$5.1 billion in assistance each year for lower income students and since the Great Recession, nearly every new dollar in tuition revenue has gone for financial aid, and the very existence of New York's independent colleges and universities allows New York to provide approximately \$8,830 for each student in the SUNY or CUNY system compared to approximately \$650 for students in private, not-for-profit colleges, and this unique balance between public and private higher education institutions enables New York to devote less resources to higher education as a percentage of our state's overall budget than all but seven other states, and

**WHEREAS**, instead of these Executive Budget proposals, we urge that the state instead raise the TAP maximum award to \$6,500 (from \$5,165); increase the TAP minimum award to \$1,000 (from \$500); expand TAP income eligibility by extending the income ceiling to \$125,000 (from \$80,000) and expand proven opportunity programs such as the Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP), the Science and Technology Entry Programs (STEP/C-STEP); and the Liberty Partnerships Program, and

**WHEREAS**, nearly 300,000 New York students choose private higher education as their best higher education opportunity, with more than 80,500 students at private, not for profit colleges currently qualifying for TAP, so that an expansion of TAP as we have recommended could serve as many as 21,000 more, and this would be a move in the right direction to assist low- and middle-income students in all sectors, and

**WHEREAS**, private, non-profit colleges and universities in New York lead the state in degree completion, and each year, more African-American and Hispanic students earn baccalaureate and graduate degrees from private, not-for-profit institutions in New York than anywhere else in the state, and since private, non-profit institutions of higher education are significant economic engines in their respective communities, collectively accounting for 400,000 jobs and almost \$80 billion in annual economic activity across the state,

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Trustees of Hilbert College urges the New York State Legislature to expand TAP for all students rather than endorse supplemental financial aid only for those attending SUNY or CUNY and tuition price controls that would harm the very students it is designed to help.