MEMORANDUM

September 25, 2019

To: Members of the Board of Trustees

From: Kristina M. Johnson, Chancellor

Subject: Tuition Benefit for Students from the Bahamas Displaced by Hurricane Dorian

Action Requested

The proposed resolution authorizes the 29 State-operated campuses of the State University System to extend resident rates for undergraduate and graduate tuition to students from the Bahamas that are displaced by Hurricane Dorian. Such rates will be effective for the 2019/20 academic year. The proposed resolution also continues to encourage the boards of trustees of the 30 community colleges operating under the program of the State University of New York and the boards of trustees of the statutory colleges at Cornell University and Alfred Ceramics, to take similar action.

Resolution

I recommend that the Board of Trustees adopt the following resolution:

Whereas Hurricane Dorian made landfall on the Abaco islands as a Category Five hurricane on September 1 and remained over the Bahama Islands through September 3, causing an estimated $7.0B in damage and leading to at least 50 deaths; and

Whereas the State of New York, and the State University of New York, has a long history of partnering with those in need; and

Whereas the Bahamas have been, and will remain, a strong partner to the State of New York and the nation, with $239.0M in goods being imported to the US from the Bahamas and the value of container cargo imported into the Port of New York from the Bahamas estimated at approximately 14 percent of all vessel imports; and
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Whereas Governor Cuomo has announced statewide efforts to aid the people of the Bahamas, such as expanding the number of drop sites for priority donations of food, dry goods, and personal hygiene; and

Whereas [on BLAT Date, Governor Cuomo has called upon the State and City University of New York to provide resident rates of tuition to students from the Bahamas displaced by the Hurricane]; and

Whereas the Board of Trustees wishes to acknowledge the plight of students impacted by the Hurricane and provide a humanitarian response to the same by acknowledging these students' *de facto* New York State residency status due to their inability to return home; now, therefore, be it

Resolved that the Chancellor or designee be, and hereby is, authorized to amend the University’s guidelines governing residency for tuition purposes to make undergraduate and graduate students from the Bahamas who have been displaced by Hurricane Dorian eligible for resident tuition rates for the 2019/20 academic year at SUNY State-operated institutions; and, be it further

Resolved that the boards of trustees of the 30 community colleges operating under the program of the State University of New York, and the boards of trustees of the statutory colleges at Cornell University and Alfred Ceramics, be, and hereby are, encouraged to take similar action or to otherwise provide assistance and support to facilitate the ability of these students to continue their academic studies at the State University of New York.

**Background**

The landfall of Hurricane Dorian in September of this year has had devastating consequences for residents of the Bahamas that are still being catalogued; including the destruction of many of its population’s residences.

As this event may, and has likely, resulted in SUNY students being displaced and unable to maintain their home domicile, it is appropriate to provide them with resident status under the SUNY Tuition Policy governing State-operated campuses for the 2019/20 academic year.
Accordingly, this proposed resolution would authorize the Chancellor or designee to amend the University’s guidelines governing residency for tuition purposes to classify the impacted group of students as residents who will be charged in-state tuition for the 2019/20 academic year. This resolution also encourages the boards of the community colleges and statutory colleges to take appropriate action to provide assistance and support to these students.