

December 3, 2021

To SUNY Board of Trustees:

Throughout the nearly 2 years of the COVID-19 pandemic, thousands of dedicated New York State Public Employees Federation (PEF) nurses employed by SUNY have worked tirelessly to step up, protect our communities, and save lives. Our members have put others before themselves to keep New Yorkers safe, and nowhere did we witness that more than in SUNY hospitals – institutions that provide a lifeline to many of New York’s most underserved and underrepresented communities.

Our work was possible in part because I developed confidence early on that SUNY System Administration, particularly Chancellor Jim Malatras, supported and deeply valued the care our members provide. During my tenure as PEF President, I’ve never experienced a more collaborative and responsive relationship as I have with Chancellor Malatras. It has made a world of difference to have a relationship based on mutual respect and open communication.

As SUNY Chancellor, Jim Malatras has been a staunch defender of, and partner with PEF members. During the darkest days of the pandemic, when PEF nurses were overworked, underpaid, and burned out, Chancellor Malatras never stopped working with us to find ways to show appreciation, gratitude and – most importantly – directly support PEF workers by helping to provide fair wages and retention incentives.

His commitment to SUNY hospitals and all 64 SUNY campuses, many which educate the nurses and other staff in our ranks, has been unwavering. Our members know Jim and value the opportunities he has provided to collaborate to improve working conditions and thereby improving the quality care SUNY provides to our communities.

Chancellor Malatras has our full faith and confidence. We look forward to continuing our partnership with him to the benefit of all New Yorkers for years to come.

Sincerely,

Wayne Spence  
President  
New York State Public Employees Federation