MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT

May 29, 2015

S.5512 (LaValle) / A.7727 (Fahy)

An act to amend the education law, in relation to the New York State Masters in Education Teacher Incentive Scholarship Program

New York University (NYU) strongly supports S.5512 (LaValle) / A.7727 (Fahy), which would expand the Masters-in-Education Teacher Incentive Scholarship Program. The expansion of the program, which offers financial aid awards in the amount of a full year’s tuition for 500 New York State residents seeking to receive a master’s degree in teaching, would allow students participating in the program the choice to attend a private college or university.

Currently, participants are only given the option to attend approved master’s degree in education programs at New York State public institutions. This program does not apply to graduate students who choose to study at the over 100 private colleges and universities throughout New York. In New York State, 70 private colleges and universities confer 61 percent of the State’s bachelor and graduate education degrees.

In order to help our top education students pursue their graduate goals and keep our best teachers in the state following graduation, it is essential to provide this opportunity to students irrespective of which institution they choose to attend. School choice is an important part of one’s education as a student’s talents and passions should be best matched to the appropriate program to ensure success. Limiting scholarships to certain graduate programs limits the flexibility for students to pursue the specific educational degrees they desire – an education and degree that will ultimately benefit their future students.

This bill will encourage our best and brightest to remain in New York, by allowing graduate education students the ability to apply the value of this scholarship to a private institution if they choose, similar to many financial aid programs in New York.

NYU strongly supports S.5512 (LaValle) / A.7727 (Fahy), and urges the Legislature to pass this bill.

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