

## The UB 20/20 Plan

I would like to thank everyone for the opportunity to speak here today and also, for taking the time to hear the goals of the University of Buffalo and The Erie County community, as well as the tools that will be needed to make those goals a reality.

There was a plan unveiled in the last six months for the expansion of the University of Buffalo. That plan was well drafted and thought out, with the idea to bring UB to new heights. This would not only bring the University, but the entire community an opportunity to share in the success that this community so desperately needs and deserves. Most people in the area have lost faith because Erie County has been in decline for so long. Governor Spitzer and many other political figures have vowed to make Western New York the focus of their efforts to return economic prosperity to Buffalo and Western New York. The first thing necessary for this is the need to identify a project or master plan with the ability to bring vast economic impact to the entire region. Generally one building project is not going to produce the economic resurgence of an area.

The UB 20/20 plan is in fact just the ticket to launch and live up to Governor Spitzer's campaign promise. Bring back a troubled community from looking like "Appalachia". This is a well drafted and carefully laid out plan that will no doubt require tremendous commitment from the state and the entire community, which will not have to be stopped midway for a new study. This area leads the way in studies that delay and often times stops projects. The Western New York area has a PHD in doing studies of proposed projects that have been bid, awarded and started. The due diligence was already done before the project was unveiled. UB President John Simpson has a vision for the University that thinks big. We should commend him for that and embrace the thinking big idea as well as the vision. This community has an inferiority complex and doesn't believe in itself. Well now is the time to lose the complex, get behind President Simpson along with the fine team that surround him and fund a plan that makes the University second to no other University in the nation.

There are very few economic engines that a community can use to uplift their economy. The manufacturing sector has been lost to China and other foreign lands. It most likely will never return as, free trade drove the final nail in American manufacturing. We are forced to buy toys and other products from foreign lands. Products that contain lead based paints and who knows what else. Our remaining factories have to abide by safe environmental standards meant to protect us as a society. They cannot dump toxins into the soil and waterways nor can they send unfriendly waste into the air. Foreign manufacturers can pay their workers whatever pittance they feel is acceptable while our manufacturers cannot. American manufacturers will never be able to compete again even if the American worker worked for the minimum wage. The Western New York area was in large part built in the early 1900's on manufacturing. We have never re-identified ourselves as an economy after the manufacturing decline. It is for these very reasons that this project makes so much sense. This is a project we can compete with other parts of the United States and the rest of the world. If this 20/20 project becomes a reality in the form that it was unveiled and not pared down to a portion of the dream, we will not only compete, we will

surpass many other Universities in the United States and the rest of the world. **The Western New York Community DESERVES this.**

The plan to grow UB by forty percent will increase the Universities economic impact from 1.5 billion dollars annually at present to a projected 2.6 billion dollars in the year 2020 if the 20/20 plan becomes a reality. This project would increase the UB generated sales tax to New York State from a current level of 69 million to 97 million along with increasing the construction spending from 55million in 2005-2006 to 180 million in 2020. We must remember the above stated projections are in present value dollars not future value so the actual number will be much larger. I also feel that one of the most compelling reasons for the project is the jobs that will be generated. In 2005-2006 the jobs created beyond UB were 11,700, with the expansion plan the job count will likely reach 19,781 in the year 2020. This does not include the 2,800 plus jobs that will be generated at the University. This statistic alone says fund the project. The majority of these jobs are jobs you would want for your family members. It is often we hear about job creation in this community but those jobs are not for the connected, they are for the other people; they are jobs that keep people in need and always one step from a disaster. These jobs we are talking about here that are associated with UB are real.

I then for all of the reasons stated above ask your committee to fund this initiative, get WNY going again and put Governor Elliott Spitzer in the history books as the one politician who took an area in 50 years of decline and brought it back to a confidence level not seen since the turn of the twentieth century. This project should be fully funded and not scaled back. This project works in conjunction with the Medical Corridor and has downtown pieces attached to it that the region has called out for since the University built the Amherst Campus years ago. This project will help expand the Medical cooridor and help further The Life Sciences that are so important.

Please do the right thing, give Erie County the engine it needs to re-discover it's greatness and fund what I believe is possibly the best initiative to hit our community in years. I would like to thank you again for this opportunity.

This statement respectfully submitted by,  
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