



Gov. Mario Cuomo enters the College of Staten Island for his public forum with an Advance in hand.

S.I. Advance Photo by Irving Silverstein.

One dialogue, with Anthony Von Myers, president of the CSI student union, lasted nearly 20 minutes, ending with Cuomo refusing to predict whether tuition at public universities will rise next year. Students stood in a group to display large oak-tag signs to get their message across.

Like several other speakers, they also urged budget money for a consolidated campus, with Von Myers noting CSI has less space per student than any other city university branch.

Another lengthy exchange, proving less friendly, took place between the governor and Island businesswoman Margaret Sklenar. She spoke in her capacity as both an official of the Island Chamber of Commerce opposing current utility surcharges tied to mass transit and representing tavern owners opposed to hiking the drinking age to 21, for which Cuomo vowed to "press hard."

Part of the exchange had Mrs. Sklenar remarking about state giveaways to some. "Who?" Cuomo challenged.

"A lot of people who get state money for different purposes," she said.

"Who?" he pressed. "That's too easy."

She tried to provide an example. "...People who go to school just because there's money ... Don't ask me questions because I'm not educated in that."

They also jostled over tax cheating and whether those in the liquor industry are unfairly blamed for deaths on the roads.

At times, Cuomo used a cadre of high-level commissioners and top aides to answer questions or make referrals to comments

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