To the Office of the SUNY Chancellor,

On behalf of the Graduate Student Organization at Stony Brook University, we are writing to you to express the immense disappointment and concern felt across the graduate student body in the face of proposed student fee increases, given the already strained financial status of so many graduate students. As it currently stands, graduate student stipends are reported to be as low as $19,000 per year, falling below what is publicly recommended to be a living wage for Suffolk County, NY. This income is only further reduced by the current imposed fees on graduate students, which under the proposed changes are close to $1,850 per year. In the face of the newly proposed fee increases, net income for graduate students fall even lower, with over $2,200 having to be paid in fees each year.

These fee increases have grown intolerable to the graduate student community, particularly under such financially strained conditions. It is for this reason that we write this open letter to oppose the proposed increases and student fees and, more importantly, raise student stipends.

Stony Brook and SUNY, by extension, seek to bring the best and brightest minds to campus to conduct research in innovative areas and showcase the potential within the SUNY system. However, we simply cannot be expected to continue to do so under such financially strained conditions with student stipends falling so significantly below the national average and fees increasing each year. It is for these reasons that we believe it is to the benefit of our university, our state, and most importantly our students to reallocate funds, to increase student stipends to a more appropriate living wage, and to place a hold on raises in graduate student fees.

Stony Brook University
Graduate Student Organization