

FUND OUR FUTURE: Prioritize Higher Education Access & Accountability

At a time when higher education has become more crucial than ever for securing a high quality job, it has become increasingly out-of-reach, especially for people from low and moderate income families. We must swiftly change course -- Illinois' economy will not grow unless we develop a workforce capable of meeting employers' needs.

Economic Benefits of Higher Education

- By 2020, 65% of jobs will require some postsecondary education and training. (1)
- College graduates with a bachelor's degree earn roughly \$1 million more over their lifetime than someone without a postsecondary degree, generating more taxable income. (2)
- Beyond generating more taxable income from individuals, higher education systems generate regional economic activity. Western Illinois University for example has an economic impact of \$473 million a year in a 16 county region. (3)
- The state makes back any money spent on higher education, with the public return in higher education being nearly 16%. (4)

Affordability in Illinois

- Illinois has the fifth highest tuition at four-year public colleges in the country and it has increased by 57% since the recession. Tuition at two year colleges has jumped by 25%. (5)
- Tuition is increasingly falling on students and their families' shoulders - almost half of tuition is borne by the student. (6)
- Monetary Award Program (MAP) grants have shrunk. In 2002, they covered 100% of tuition and fees at community colleges and public universities. In 2016, they cover 47% of costs at community colleges and 32% of costs at public universities. (7)

State of Distress

- Funding instability and cuts have prompted massive layoffs. In the last year, Eastern Illinois University is down 487 positions, (8) Chicago State University's staff shrunk by 40%, and Governors State University closed two business centers that created thousands of jobs (9). Systems serving students with the fewest resources are the hardest hit.
- Student confidence has fallen. Eight students leave for an out-of-state public college for every out-of-state student that comes to Illinois. (10) Enrollment is down significantly from the year before at Chicago State University (32%), Eastern Illinois University (25%), and Southern Illinois University (24%). (11)

Fund Our Future: Solutions for Affordable, Accountable Institutions

- Higher education is only 3% of the state's budget -- one third of the national average. Illinois must prioritize this critical institution, by passing a full year budget at FY15 levels, inclusive of the Monetary Award Program.
- We should provide our students and parents access to longitudinal data that allows informed decision-making on career and college options and increased transparency on higher education institutions' performance. We should provide reports and online tools with information on tuition, other college costs, student loan default and repayment rates, degree completions rates, and job placement standards, building on a framework created by the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association.



Citations

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