



STOP THE CUTS - Invest in the future of Texas!

Texas institutions of higher education were established to provide quality, affordable education for Texas residents. However, as a percentage of overall public university budgets, state funding for higher education has fallen nearly every year for the last two decades. In 2000, state formula funding made up 27% of academic state university budgets. By 2014 it made up just 16% of university budgets. The legislature's long divestment from public higher education has already forced dramatic increases in tuition that have put college out of reach for many Texans. The legislature's cuts have also forced the elimination of thousands of university teaching and staff positions, in addition to consolidation and privatization of services, threatening the quality of our state's higher education.

The 85th Legislature has already proposed dramatic cuts in funding for Texas higher education. The Senate's first budget cuts \$1 billion – while other bills threaten to eliminate other crucial sources of funding. These cuts further threaten the existence and mission of public higher education in this state.

Protect Access to Higher Education for all Texans – NO cuts to financial aid for low-income students

SB 18 proposes to eliminate a third of a billion dollars in financial assistance to low-income and needy students. This bill would halt “tuition set-asides” that funded financial aid to over 200,000 low-income students last year.

Protect quality, affordable higher education – NO to “performance-based” funding

SB 543, a so-called “performance-based tuition” plan, would force universities to cut administrative costs while increasing the number of undergraduate degrees awarded. Universities that meet these requirements would be allowed to raise tuition. For each year that a university failed to increase the number of undergraduate degrees awarded while decreasing administrative costs, tuition would be frozen. SB 543 would further erode the quality of public higher education in Texas by encouraging universities to become “graduation mills” that don't provide a quality education to students. The bill would also punish institutions who educate higher quantities of lower income students who require more resources and assistance to graduate.

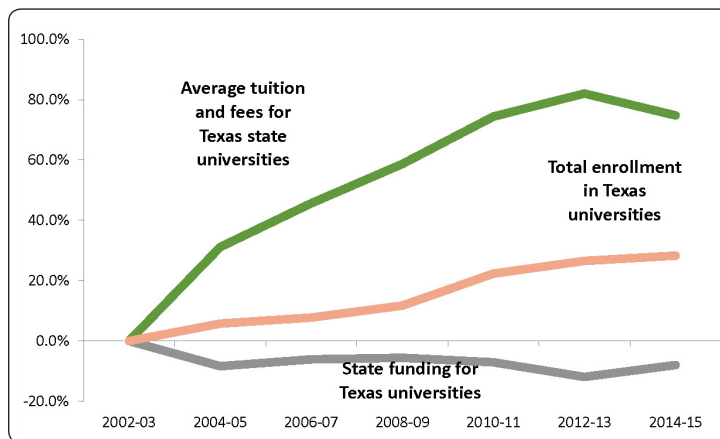
Reign in soaring tuition costs by restoring funding to Texas higher education

There is momentum in the legislature to bring tuition under control, but it must be coupled with increased funding for universities. Only by properly funding, overseeing, and regulating universities will the legislature be able to provide quality, affordable higher education for Texans.

Protect quality higher education – reverse the hiring freeze in universities

The governor has instructed universities to implement an immediate hiring freeze through the end of August. Under the terms of the freeze, no agency should post a new position or fill a vacated one, and savings should not be used for other purposes. A hiring freeze now will make tight budgets even tighter in our universities. It will also contribute to higher turnover and lower quality services as dedicated staff who are already stretched thin are forced to shoulder more work from unfilled positions this year.

TSEU POSITION: Restore funding to higher education and reverse the decades-long trend of reduced state funding for higher education. Our economic prosperity tomorrow depends on the state's ability to educate Texans today. Provide a quality, affordable higher education to every Texan who seeks one.



OPPOSE: SB 18 to eliminate financial assistance for hundreds of thousands of low-income students
SB 543 to implement “performance-based tuition” that will encourage cutting administrative costs, increasing diplomas awarded, and open the door to tuition increases

SUPPORT: Increased formula funding for all state academic universities and health-related institutions