



Fund Our Future: Stop the cuts, Stop the layoffs, Invest in Higher Education TSEU supports increased state funding for universities

TSEU POSITION:

Restore all funding cut from higher education during the 82nd legislative session. The cuts enacted in 2011 have forced radical increases in tuition and fees charged to students and forced the elimination of thousands of university teaching and staff positions. Every Texan has the right to quality public higher education. TEXAS CAN AFFORD IT.

Invest in the Future of Texas

Restoring these cuts is not enough. 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 for a quality higher education to every Texan who seeks one.



Background Information:

- **Decades-long Trend:** As a percentage of overall public university budgets, state funding for higher education has fallen nearly every year for the last two decades. This trend worsened with tuition deregulation [2003], which sent tuition/fees soaring and pushed higher education out of reach for many low and middle income Texans. According to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the statewide average total academic charges for a student taking 15 SCHs at a public university has increased by 90 percent since tuition deregulation in 2003.¹
- **82nd Texas Legislature:** In 2011, lawmakers cut deep into public universities' budgets. Funds appropriated for higher education for FY 2012-13 were reduced by \$969 million. Texas public universities have struggled to keep up with the growing need of Texans seeking higher education due to the cuts. Many universities have made difficult choices such as eliminating courses, laying off critical employees, or turning to the privatization of campus services. These measures further threaten the existence and mission of public higher education in this state.

Funding Method:

- **TSEU Supports use of Rainy-Day Fund:** HB1 and SB1 call for further cuts to higher education over current biennium funding of \$15.1 billion. The House proposed \$14.8 billion and the Senate proposed \$14.9 billion. These are a \$300 million cut and a \$200 million cut to higher education funding, respectively. TSEU calls on the 83rd legislature to find the revenue to increase funding for higher education and supports the use of monies from the Rainy Day Fund for higher education funding.
- **TSEU Opposes Performance-Based Funding:** The Higher Education Outcome-Based Funding Act (2011) directed the Higher Education Coordinating Board to develop and propose a funding model that allocates resources to institutions based on both enrollment trends and student outcomes. A proposed plan is in place to tie ten percent of base funding for public universities to graduation rates, the number of degrees awarded and other student outcomes.² Performance-based funding will further erode the quality of public higher education in Texas by incentivizing the lessening of academic rigor to achieve better outcomes. PBF also punishes institutions who educate higher quantities of disadvantaged students.

¹Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Tuition and Fees Data. <http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/reports/PDF/2460.PDF?CFID=37576734&CFTOKEN=69624311>

²"Lawmakers predict changes in higher education funding" [Austin American Statesman](#), January 25, 2013