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## **Michigan 44<sup>th</sup> in nation in per-resident support for higher education**

*State ranked 20<sup>th</sup> in 2001*

As state officials work toward the state's 2019-20 budget, new data shows how far our state has fallen in supporting higher education, putting the burden of financing a college education on the backs of families and students.

Michigan today ranks 44<sup>th</sup> nationally in per resident support for higher education, at \$195.52, compared to a national average of \$280.60, according to data compiled by the Center for the Study of Education Policy at Illinois State University and the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO). In 2001, our state ranked 20<sup>th</sup> in the nation in per-resident support for higher education, at \$230.56 per resident – \$35 higher than currently before considering inflation.

If Michigan actually appropriated support for higher education at the national average, we would invest about \$850 million more in our state's public universities – a figure that could dramatically lower college expenses for Michigan students and families.

Adjusted for inflation, Michigan in 2001 appropriated about \$2.8 billion in higher education; in the 2018-19 budget, the state contributed about \$1.7 billion. That's more than a billion dollar cut in state support for higher education, and those cuts, plus increased institutional spending on student scholarships and financial aid, account for nearly all of the higher tuition students face at public universities in Michigan.

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer proposed a 3.0 percent increase for higher education for the coming fiscal year, a modest effort toward restoring state funding. But the Senate has slashed that to 1.0 percent, and the House to just 0.4 percent, continuing the trend toward disinvestment in higher education.

"As lawmakers move toward completion on the state's budget, we want to remind them that college graduates are the vital ingredient in a successful knowledge economy – one with high paying jobs. It's also important that lawmakers realize there is a direct relationship between inadequate appropriations for universities and higher student loan debt for less affluent students," said Daniel J. Hurley, CEO of the Michigan Association of State Universities.

Data from the Michigan Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives predicts that between now and 2026, the average number of Michigan job openings requiring a four-year degree or higher will grow by 11 percent, while jobs requiring a high school diploma, apprenticeship and on-the-job training will increase by only 4.9 percent.

"Michigan used to be a leader in valuing higher education. As we saw when Amazon passed over Michigan for its HQ2 operations, it's hard to convince good paying knowledge economy companies to invest in our state when we are unwilling to invest in ourselves," said Hurley. "We call on lawmakers to recognize their role in improving college affordability and reducing student debt by supporting higher education as Gov. Whitmer proposed in the 2019-20 state budget."