



News for Immediate Release

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University Leaders Thank Governor for Level Funding, Agree to Work at Keeping Tuition Increases Low for Pennsylvania Students

Harrisburg – Governor Tom Corbett, joined by a dozen leaders of state universities, announced today that the proposed 2013-14 budget will maintain funding levels for state and state-related universities.

In return for \$1.58 billion in funding to higher education, university leaders in turn promised to work to keep tuition increases as low as possible for their students.

“Our message to college students today is that both my administration and the leaders of your state and state-related schools are committed to making the dream of higher education attainable,” Corbett said.

“We are working together to make a higher education in Pennsylvania both excellent and affordable,” Corbett said.

“For the second consecutive year, we propose level funding as part of our commitment to higher education. In return, the leaders of these universities have promised to work to keep tuition increases as low as possible for students.”

“Our commitment allows schools to plan their budgets for the coming year and make the best use of their resources. Their commitment should allow students and their families to plan their own budgets,” Corbett said.

Higher education leaders joining Corbett today included presidents and chancellors of Temple University, Penn State University, Lincoln University and the University of Pittsburgh, as well as Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology and the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education.

Also attending the press conference today was Secretary of Education Ron Tomalis, Sen. Jake Corman (R-Centre County) and Rep. Kerry Benninghoff (R-Centre County).

This is the second consecutive year Corbett has proposed funding higher education, maintaining funding at its full 2011-12 levels.

“The largest portion of our state budget is devoted to education. This is a core function of government and one that we take very seriously,” Corbett said.

Both proposals were among the recommendations made by the Governor's Advisory Commission on Postsecondary Education. Led by Rob Wonderling, the commission conducted a nine-month study, gathering information from educators, business people and citizens around the state.

In November, the commission submitted more than a dozen key recommendations for improving educational and training choices for the future. Among those recommendations was establish a long-term financial and accountability model, linking any future funding increases to performance and outcome-based measures and contain tuition costs.

"Today's announcement of an affordability partnership between the commonwealth and its universities is welcome news for Temple's students and their families who are struggling to balance the burden of excessive student-loan debt with the need to earn the college degrees that are so essential to better career opportunities in the 21st century," said Temple University President Neil Theobald.

Tuition increases were at historic lows during the 2012-13 school year for Pennsylvania's state and state-related universities. Temple froze tuition with no increase, while Penn State's overall tuition was increased 2.4 percent for its main campus, while Pitt, Lincoln and the PASSHE universities raised tuition 3 percent.

For students at Penn State, Temple and Pitt, these were the lowest increases in more than 10 years. For PASSHE students, it was the smallest tuition increase in five years.

"As chairman of the PASSHE Board of Governors," Guido M. Pichini said, "I am aware of how difficult it is for many of our students to pay their college bills. Many of the students who attend our universities are the first members of their families to attend college. They come from working families where the parents often work multiple jobs so their sons and daughters have this opportunity. They also are Pennsylvania's future leaders; we owe them our best effort.

"I am very cognizant of the enormous pressure on the Governor and the Legislature to meet the many needs of Pennsylvania's citizenry, especially in this challenging fiscal climate. Over the last several years PASSHE universities have taken significant actions to reduce their costs."

"The continued investment in higher education by the commonwealth is essential, not only to our students' futures, but also to Pennsylvania's future. We welcome the opportunity to work with the Governor and the Legislature to help our students succeed, for the benefit of us all."

For more information, visit www.pa.gov.

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