

NEW JERSEY

# Association of State Colleges and Universities

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## **Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 114 Assembly Higher Education Committee February 22, 2016**

The state colleges and universities share the sponsor's commitment to making a college education affordable for the citizens of New Jersey. While the concept of the "\$10,000-degree program" has gained some popular attention, it requires a closer look to understand its limitations.

Degree programs with a total cost of \$10,000 often rely on online education and competency-based credit. Because of such requirements, these programs are not available to many students or for many majors. Moreover, a degree program costing \$10,000 does not necessarily reduce the institution's cost of instruction and materials.

The resolution states that institutions in Texas and Florida have established \$10,000- degree programs. The experiences in those states should be scrutinized closely.

### **Texas**

- In Texas, most of the \$10,000-degree programs require students to accumulate college credits through:
  - dual-enrollment courses while in high school, or
  - through transfer of credits from a community college.
    - The cost of dual-enrollment and community college programs may not be included in the \$10,000 figure.
    - The cost of books is generally excluded as well.
- Programs in Texas also require students to test out of developmental education programs.

### **Florida**

- In Florida, some programs require students to have a minimum grade-point average of at least 3.0 and attend full-time, excluding many students.

### **Conclusion**

The best way to keep college affordable is for states to adequately invest in their public colleges and universities. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) found that Fiscal Year 2012 was a turning point for public higher education in the U.S.: it was the year that tuition surpassed state

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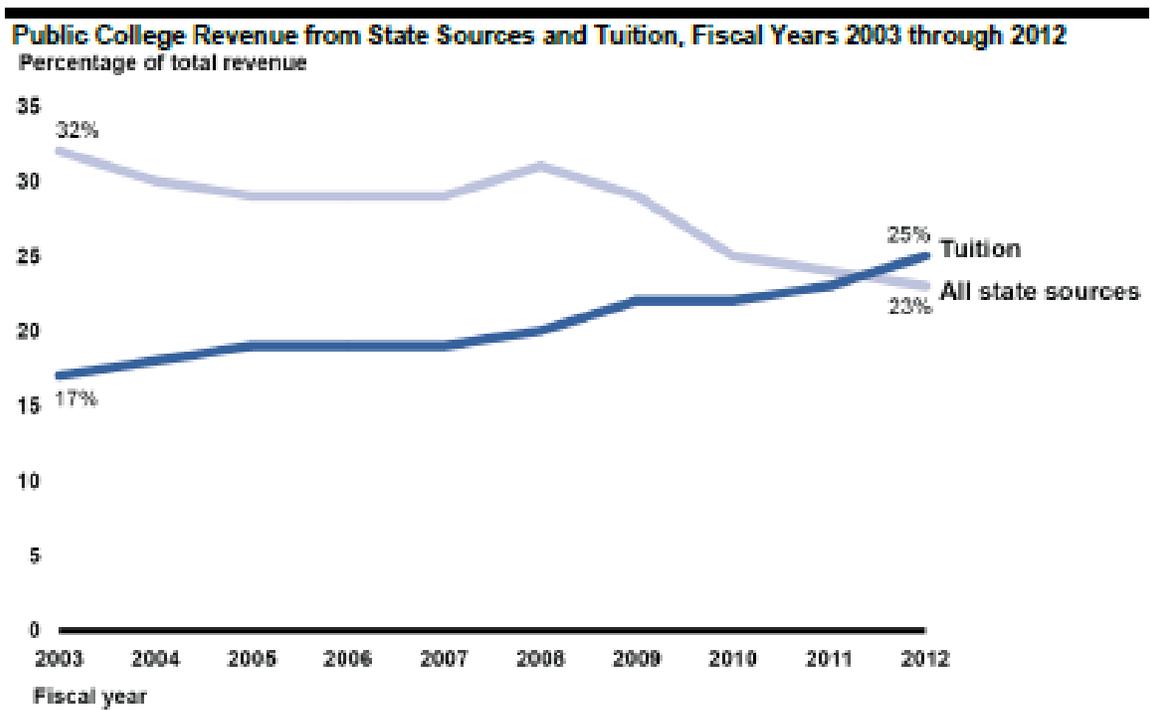
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funding as the principal revenue source for public colleges and universities, as indicated in this chart:



Source: GAO analysis of Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Finance component data. | GAO-15-151

Through a stronger partnership between the State and our public institutions of higher education, tuition can be kept affordable for all of New Jersey's students.