Montana students ask lawmakers to support investments in higher education on par with those of the past with $24 million for a funded tuition freeze and $5 million to restore state-sponsored financial aid. This would place the MUS state appropriation even, in real dollars, with state support in 1992.

While decreased state support is only part of problems like college affordability and the student debt crisis, decreased state support for higher ed compounds the problem for Montana students & families.

State support to the Montana University System (MUS) Unrestricted funds is roughly $22 million less in real dollars than in 1992.

While MUS State appropriations to the MUS have increased by a net $66 million since 1992, cuts from 1992 to 2006, and sporadic cuts since, have left state support outpaced by inflation for 27 years.

In Addition, $5.3 million/yr of state need- and merit-based aid has been cut over the past 4 years. Today, 60% of MT students borrow to attend college, and Montana borrowers graduate with an average of $28,000 in student debt.

Montana’s economy can’t afford to fund higher ed at lower levels than years past, and we can’t afford to shift more costs for a college education to our students & families.

Please support proposals to invest $24 million in the MUS funded tuition freeze and restore $5 million of state-sponsored financial aid for Montana students & families who need it most.