



2011 State of the State Addresses and Higher Education

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March 29, 2011

Each year, most governors address a joint meeting of their legislative bodies to articulate their vision for the state and to outline key public policy priorities in the upcoming legislative session. Taken together, these addresses provide insight into the national policy dynamics for state governments.

For higher education leaders, these addresses often forecast the governor's higher education agenda and forthcoming policy initiatives. Key themes stemming from this year's addresses include higher education's role in economic development and job creation, state aid to higher education and college degree completion. Governors have also outlined new policy priorities aimed at improving institutional performance, maintaining state operating support for public universities and advancing student success.

Provided below is a compilation of key higher education themes, policy proposals, and a state-by-state summary of gubernatorial higher education priorities included in governors' state of the state addresses to date.

State of the States/Budget Addresses by the Numbers

Number of addresses included in analysis: 50/50

Number of addresses mentioning higher education: 42

Key Higher Education Themes

1. Economic development/innovation/research (AL, MD, KY, MI, MT, NE, NV, NH, NJ, NY, OH, UT, TN, TX, VA, VT)
2. State aid/funding (AL, AR, CO, ID, IN, KS, LA, ME, NV, NE, ND, PA, RI, TN, VA, WA)
3. Degree completion (AR, CT, KY, MD, NV, OR, TN, UT, VA, WV)
4. College affordability (AR, CT, MD, MN, MO, MT, TX, PA, VA, WA)
5. State financial aid (AK, AR, GA, ID, IL, MO, NC, NV, TN, WA)
6. Improving postsecondary attainment (AR, HI, MO, TN, WA)
7. College readiness (ID, NC, OR, SD)
8. College infrastructure (GA, HI, SD)
9. Performance funding (AR, ND, TX)

10. Dual enrollment/early college (MS, NH)
11. Systemic reforms/governance changes (CT, IL)
12. Student debt (VT)
13. Tax incentives for university giving (AK)
14. College credits for veterans (TX)
15. Procurement reforms (OK)

Higher Education Policy Proposals

1. Performance-based campus funding (AR, ND, TX)
2. Encourage skilled immigrants to reside in the state (MI)
3. Re-direct some property tax revenues to higher education (NV)
4. Higher education income tax credit to reduce student debt (VT)
5. Higher education savings bonds (ME)
6. State funding should follow students (PA)
7. Recognizing veterans' knowledge and skills with college credits (TX)
8. Promise program for high school juniors, opportunity for two years of college at no cost (NC)

A State-by-State Summary of 2011 State of the State/Budget Addresses and Higher Education

UPDATED: March 9, 2011

Alabama

Gov. Robert Bentley

[State of the State Address](#)

March 1, 2011

- **QUOTE:** "We have increased state funding for higher education and given our presidents more flexibility in their budgets."

Alaska

Gov. Sean Parnell (R)

[State of the State Address](#) (click here to view address)

January 19, 2011

- Praised efforts to spur private sector donations and increase tax credits for gifts to state higher education and job-training institutions
- Lauded the Alaska Performance Scholarship, which he argues will allow more than 9,000 Alaska seniors the opportunity for university or job training. Over the next three years, the program is expected to serve 30,000 more students.
- Cited a K-12 school that reported its students increased rigor of their programs to comply with the requirements of the performance scholarship.

- Called for a sustainable funding plan for the scholarship
- **QUOTE:** “We describe the Alaska Performance Scholarship as an invitation to excellence, but it’s so much more. Every student willing to take the challenge of a more rigorous curriculum can earn these scholarships. Over the long term, these scholarships will have a profound impact on the quality of life in Alaska, and on our state’s ability to compete in the global economy.”

Arizona

Gov. Jan Brewer (R)

[*State of the State Address*](#)

January 10, 2011

- Gov. Brewer did not mention higher education in her remarks

Arkansas

Gov. Mike Beebe (D)

[*State of the State Address*](#)

January 11, 2011

- Lamented low degree completion rates
- Argued that the state has started to remove financial barriers to degree completion
- Called for a 1 percent increase in state aid to colleges and universities
- Argued for linking coursework completion and graduation rates with state funding
- Set a goal of doubling the number of college graduates in Arkansas by 2025
- Wants any tuition increases to be modest

California

Gov. Jerry Brown (D)

[*State of the State Address*](#)

January 31, 2011

- Praised the strength of the state’s universities and wants to continue their world-class reputations

Colorado

Gov. John Hickenlooper (D)

[*State of the State Address*](#)

January 13, 2011

- Lt. Gov will take on dual role as head of Department of Higher Education
- Indicated that the state needs to examine the funding structure for higher education
- **QUOTE:** “In the end, we believe we’ll need to engage all of Colorado in a serious conversation about the value of higher education. As somebody who chose to start a new

business in the midst of a previous recession, let me tell you, this doesn't have to be the time to limit our investments or our dreams.”

Connecticut

Gov. Dannel Malloy (D)

Budget Address

January 5, 2011

- Complete overhaul of university system proposed, with goal of greater flexibility for colleges
- Wants to graduate more students in a timely manner
- Believes UCONN and other state universities will live within their state allotment and not raise tuition beyond the inflation rate

Delaware

Gov. Jack Markell (D)

State of the State Address

January 20, 2011

- Gov. Markell did not mention higher education in his remarks

Florida

Gov. Rick Scott (R)

State of the State Address

March 8, 2011

- Gov. Scott did not mention higher education in his remarks

Georgia

Gov. Nathan Deal (R)

State of the State Address

January 12, 2011

- Called for \$50 million in bond funding for repairs and renovations in the University system and \$28 million in bond funding for upgrades at technical colleges
- Expressed concern over the future of the Georgia HOPE Scholarship Expresses concern about the future of the HOPE Scholarship Program
- **QUOTE:** “If we are to save HOPE we must make programmatic changes during this legislative session. I am ready and your leadership has indicated they are ready to make those changes. My 2012 budget does not authorize HOPE expenditures beyond what the lottery produces; therefore, we must act now to maintain the Georgia jewel known as HOPE.”

Hawaii

Gov. Neal Abercrombie (D)

State of the State Address

January 24, 2011

- Stated that he had “high expectations” for the Hawaii Graduation Initiative, a plan by the University of Hawaii to increase the number of college graduates by 25 percent by 2015. To reach this goal, higher ed must be affordable and reach out to traditionally underserved groups
- Governor has “ambitious capital improvement plans” for the U of Hawaii System

Idaho

Gov. Butch Otter (R)

State of the State Address

January 10, 2011

- Budget includes funds to pay for all Idaho juniors to take the college entrance exam
- Governor is “gratified” by the efforts of colleges and university presidents to grow during these difficult economic times
- Would like to maintain the Opportunity Scholarship Fund
- **QUOTE:** “One area of our State budget where there is private sector options to partially offset our need for public austerity is higher education.”
- **QUOTE:** “And higher education does have some built-in constituencies that can provide alternatives to a higher level of general fund support.”

Illinois

Gov. Pat Quinn (D)

Budget Address

February 16, 2011

- State needs to “revamp” higher education to increase access for all students
- Plans to increase funding for scholarships to needy students, with a community college focus
- Wants to abolish the legislative scholarship program

Indiana

Gov. Mitch Daniels (R)

State of the State Address

January 11, 2011

- Called for ending the practice of shifting deficits to university by making them wait until the state has the cash to pay them

Iowa

Gov. Terry Branstad (R)

Budget Address

January 27, 2011

- Gov. Branstad did not mention higher education in his remarks

Kansas

Gov. Sam Brownback (R)

State of the State Address

January 12, 2011

- Stated that his budget will stabilize state support for higher education for the first time since the Great Recession began.

Kentucky

Gov. Steve Beshear

State of the Commonwealth Address

February 1, 2011

- Lauded efforts to smooth transfer from 2 to 4-year colleges
- Praised the growing number of state students going to college, fewer in remedial classes and more are graduating
- Supports legislature aiming at reducing the dropout rate

Louisiana

Gov. Bobby Jindal (R)

State of the State Address

March 20, 2011

- **QUOTE:** “Secondly, we've asked you for help in changing the higher education formula. Obviously, we've got to work with the Board of Regents to do that, to make sure we're rewarding excellence and not encouraging duplicate programs. We can't be all things to all people.”
- **QUOTE:** “You should have greater flexibility to work with the administration to achieve savings, every agency, every program across the board should have to compete for those resources so we don't continue to have to go to higher education and healthcare – two areas we need to be investing in to continue to move our state forward.”

Maine

Gov. Paul LePage (R)

[State of the State Address](#)

February 10, 2011

- Pledged no cuts to higher education and will continue to provide “strong support” for scholarship programs. Higher education must remain affordable.
- Wants to start the discussion about creating Maine Higher Education Savings Bonds

Maryland

Gov. Martin O’Malley (D)

[State of the State Address](#)

February 3, 2011

- Budget includes money to limit tuition increases to 3 percent
- Governor values degree completion
- Calls for funding Complete College Maryland, a competitive grant program that would provide funding to institutions of higher education that develop and implement innovative initiatives to assist students with the successful attainment of their degree or certificate.

Massachusetts

Gov. Deval Patrick (D)

[Inaugural Address](#)

January 6, 2011

- Praised past public investments, including the University of Massachusetts

Michigan

Gov. Rick Snyder (R)

[State of the State Address](#)

January 19, 2011

- The state needs to do a better job of connecting workforce development, community colleges and economic development organizations
- Wants to encourage skilled immigrants to live in the state
- Praised a partnership between research universities and Proctor and Gamble
- **QUOTE:** “We need to be a place that openly encourages innovators and entrepreneurs to come to our state. The evidence is clear: that advanced college degree immigrants can make a tremendous difference in creating a positive economic activity environment that benefits us all.”

Minnesota

Gov. Mark Dayton (D)

[State of the State Address](#)

February 9, 2011

- Concerned about the cost of higher education at two and four-year colleges and universities
- Encourages collaboration between higher ed and business communities
- **QUOTE:** “Fewer people paying lower taxes has meant state per-pupil aid for our students from kindergarten through 12th grade has been reduced by 14% in real, after-inflation dollars during the past 8 years. Tuition in our state’s two-year public colleges has risen to the third highest in the nation; tuitions in our four-year universities are among the top ten highest.

Mississippi

Gov. Haley Barbour (R)

[State of the State Address](#)

January 11, 2011

- Wants to make dual enrollment easier and more common

Missouri

Gov. Jay Nixon (D)

[State of the State Address](#)

January 19, 2011

- Called for extending the A+ scholarship program to more schools
- Budget includes “millions of dollars” for the state’s three scholarship programs (Bright Flight, Access Missouri and A+)
- Give a \$500 bonus to A+ and Access Missouri recipients who score well on the AP exams in math and science

- Has a goal of 60 percent of state residents holding college degrees (currently at 35 percent)
- Praised efforts to keep tuition flat and higher enrollment numbers at colleges

Montana

Gov. Brian Schweitzer (D)

[State of State Address](#)

January 26, 2011

- Budget includes enough cash to cap tuition for each Montana student
- Tuition increase=tax increase on Montana families
- University system is “incubator of innovation.”

Nebraska

Gov. Dave Heineman (R)

[State of the State Address](#)

January 13, 2011

- Supports a one-time, \$25 million investment in the University of Nebraska’s Innovation Campus.
- Sees a great opportunity to expand and grow the University of Nebraska’s research base with the institution’s move to the Big Ten.
- **QUOTE:** “State funded state aid to education in FY12 remains at \$810 million and increases by \$50 million to \$860 million by FY13. I am not proposing any reduction in higher education funding for the University of Nebraska, our state colleges and Nebraska’s community colleges.”

Nevada

Gov. Brian Sandoval (R)

[State of State Address](#)

January 24, 2011

- Budget cut of 7 percent for higher ed, over 17 percent cut w/stimulus fund loss
- Redirects nine cents of property tax from Clark and Washoe counties to higher ed in those counties.
- Disappointed in graduation rates at state colleges and universities
- Budget includes \$10 million to preserve the Kenny C. Guinn Millennium Scholarship
- **QUOTE:** “State, local, and student revenue for the Nevada System of Higher Education is reduced by less than seven percent. With the loss of one-time stimulus dollars, the total reduction is 17.66 percent. However, the Regents have the option of bringing tuition and fees more in line with other Western States, so many of these funds can be recovered.”
- **QUOTE:** “And what of our colleges and universities? It is widely acknowledged that they are important for our state’s economic development. But here again, the system has failed us. Graduation rates after six years at the state’s public two-year colleges range from a high of 20 percent, to a dismal low of only four percent. Our four-year institutions have graduation rates below 50 percent.”

New Hampshire

Gov. John Lynch (D)

[*State of the State Address*](#)

January 6, 2011

- Lauded efforts between business and higher ed in innovation, research and economic development
- Praised expansion of the Community College System's Project Running Start to more high schools, giving students access to college classes and credits.

New Jersey

Gov. Chris Christie (R)

[*State of the State Address*](#)

January 11, 2011

- Thanked Gov. Kean for his commission's report on higher education, and agrees that higher education is vital to the state's economic growth

New Mexico

Gov. Susana Martinez (R)

[*State of the State Address*](#)

January 18, 2011

- Gov. Martinez did not mention higher education in her remarks

New York

Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D)

[*State of the State Address*](#)

January 5, 2011

- Expressed need to better tap the economic development potential of higher education institutions in the state

North Carolina

Gov. Bev Perdue (D)

[*State of the State Address*](#)

February 14, 2011

- Praised the Career and College-Ready Set Go! Initiative to prepare all students to graduate ready for a career, college or technical training.

- Put forth a plan for high school juniors who sign up for the College and Career Promise, who meet certain criteria while maintaining academic performance, will be eligible to earn a two-year degree without cost.
- **QUOTE:** “By consolidating existing programs and nurturing partnerships between high schools and our community college system, career training and a college degree will be more affordable to our students than ever before. In the budget I will submit to you, any high school junior who signs up at school for the Career and College Promise - who meets certain criteria while maintaining high academic standards will be eligible to earn a two-year college degree at no cost.”

North Dakota

Gov. Jack Dalrymple (R)

[*State of the State Address*](#)

January 4, 2011

- Called for performance-based funding at public colleges and universities
- **QUOTE:** “We must begin a new approach to funding higher education where we ask the board of higher education to develop a funding methodology that is based on the outcomes that education leaders and citizens would like to see from their college campuses. We can begin slowly, and follow the guidance of a Commission on Higher Education funding.”

Ohio

Gov. John Kasich (R)

[*State of State Address*](#)

March 8, 2011

- **QUOTE:** One-third of Ohio college graduates are leaving this state within three years of graduating. Our best and our brightest, our seed corn, have decided that they need to go somewhere else to realize their hopes and dreams.
- **QUOTE:** “Education, K-12 and post-secondary, of course it's critical to our economic future. But I want to tell you, more choice, more accountability, more dollars in the classroom instead of bureaucracy will improve our schools, and we are going to have a significant reform agenda by linking our education system with business opportunities, commercializing more products from our universities, letting our professors' research team own a piece of what they invent. It's going to improve higher education. All of these reforms are going to make us much stronger.”
- **QUOTE:** “You need to think about what we do with our community colleges, our technical schools and universities, to work in conjunction with businesses so the students and the workers are trained for the jobs that need to be filled today and the jobs that will be there tomorrow.”

Oklahoma

Gov. Mary Fallin (R)

State of the State Address

February 7, 2011

- Asked public colleges and universities to move to the state's purchasing card system, believes this will save \$1.6 million while approving accountability and transparency

Oregon

Gov. John Kitzhaber

State of the State Address

January 10, 2011

- Outlined a vision for state education, including having 80 percent of students attain at least two years or post-secondary education or training by 2020.
- **QUOTE:** "First we need to know where we are going - we need a destination. And here it is. By 2020, the end of this decade - by the time the children entering kindergarten this year graduate from high school -- we should live in a state where our children are ready to learn before they get to school; where they have the resources and attention to learn and our teachers have the time and support to teach; where dropout rates are steadily falling and graduation rates are steadily rising; where all Oregon high school graduates are prepared to pursue a post-secondary education without remediation; and where 80 percent of them achieve at least two years of post-secondary education or training."

Pennsylvania

Gov. Tom Corbett

Budget Address

March 8, 2011

- **QUOTE:** "I am also calling on employees in the State System of Higher Education to consider sacrifice. I ask nothing more of our best educated people than to face up to a hard economic reality. The system in which you have flourished is in trouble. We cannot save it by individual efforts. The sacrifice must be collective, as will be the ultimate rewards."
- **QUOTE:** "This fiscal crisis is a time to re-think state spending on higher education. Despite state subsidies over the past decades, tuition has continued to increase. If the intent was to keep tuition rates down, it failed. We need to find a new model. When it comes to higher education we should do the same thing that we do in basic education: the dollars should follow the student. It's their money."

Rhode Island

Gov. Lincoln Chafee

[Budget Address](#)

March 8, 2011

- Called for an additional \$10 million in funding
- **QUOTE:** “We must also make lasting investments in our higher education system. We are fortunate to have three fine public institutions of learning - the University of Rhode Island, Rhode Island College and the Community College of Rhode Island. Each plays an important role in educating our students. Unfortunately, the state's contribution to the Rhode Island higher education system has plummeted in recent years. My budget reverses that trend by proposing an additional \$10 million for our higher education system. We must demonstrate our commitment to higher education and to the young people of this state. There is no more important rung on the ladder to success.”

South Carolina

Gov. Nikki Haley (R)

[State of the State Address](#)

January 19, 2011

- Gov. Haley did not mention higher education in her remarks

South Dakota

Gov. Dennis Daugaard (R)

[State of the State Address](#)

January 11, 2011

- Praised student performance in high school, ACT scores and high college-going rate
- Called for better student preparation, expanding technical education opportunities, increased bonding capacity of our post-secondary tech schools.

Tennessee

Gov. Bill Haslam (R)

[State of the State Address](#)

March 14, 2011

- Higher education reduced 2 percent, no drop in financial aid for low-income students
- State is raising retention and graduation standards, greater accountability
- Called for the public investment labs and universities to work with the private sector to create jobs
- \$10 million operating grant for Memphis Research Consortium to encourage collaboration and research and strategy in the health care field.
- **QUOTE:** “In Tennessee, we face the challenge of increasing the percentage of our adult population with a college degree (21 percent of our adult population has a degree

compared with 30 percent of the national population) while asking our institutions of higher learning to do that with less money. However, it's a challenge that must be met, and I am confident that our institutions of higher learning are up to the task."

Texas

Gov. Rick Perry (R)

[*State of State Address*](#)

February 8, 2011

- Called for an expansion of STEM academies, schools that teach skills needed to compete for high tech jobs and college scholarships
- Expressed an interest in pursuing outcomes-based funding at state colleges and universities
- Challenged the state to create a bachelor's degree that cost no more than \$10,000, including textbooks
- Supports a program called "College Credit 4 Heroes," which rewards veterans with college credits for their knowledge and skills
- **QUOTE:** "Today, I'm challenging our institutions of higher education to develop bachelor's degrees that cost no more than \$10,000, including textbooks. Let's leverage web-based instruction, innovative teaching techniques and aggressive efficiency measures to reach that goal. Imagine the potential impact on affordability and graduation rates, and the number of skilled workers it would send into our economy."

Utah

Gov. Gary Herbert (R)

[*State of the State Address*](#)

January 26, 2011

- Stated that higher education translates to economic success
- Praised the U of Utah's research capacity and its role in economic development

Vermont

Gov. Peter Shumlin (D)

[*State of the State Address*](#)

January 25, 2011

- Concerned about student debt
- Called for a higher education income tax credit that will help residents pay off their debts

Virginia

Gov. Robert McDonnell (R)

[*State of the Commonwealth Address*](#)

January 12, 2011

- One of the governor’s top four priorities is “Implementing major reforms and more accountability in higher education to make college more affordable and accessible for our students”
- Called for a new \$50 million targeted investment in state higher education
- **QUOTE:** “One of the most troubling Virginia statistics from the last decade is that college tuition has doubled. That cannot continue. I will not tolerate a system that prices our young people out of their futures. To fix the problem we must reverse the decade long trend of disinvestment, while requiring more accountability and innovation at our institutions.”

Washington

Gov. Chris Gregoire (D)

[*State of the State Address*](#)

January 11, 2011

- Supports tuition flexibility at colleges
- Declared support for the recommendations of the Higher Education Funding Task Force

West Virginia

Gov. Earl Ray Tromblin (D)

[*State of the State Address*](#)

January 12, 2011

- Called for lowering the dropout rate in high school and college

Wisconsin

Gov. Scott Walker (R)

[*State of the State Address*](#)

February 1, 2011

- Gov. Walker did not mention higher education in his remarks

Wyoming

Gov. Matt Mead (R)

[*State of the State Address*](#)

January 12, 2011

- Gov. Mead did not mention higher education in his remarks