

MASSACHUSETTS FIGHTS FOR PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION

Federal Attacks on Students, Staff and Faculty at Public Colleges Hurt Us All

THE PROBLEM: The Trump administration is sowing chaos in our state's public higher education system by freezing and canceling federal funding that supports research and other academic pursuits and programs such as TRIO Student Support Services. The federal administration is using false claims of racial bias and prejudice to end its support of public higher education. Hundreds of millions of dollars are at stake for public colleges and universities.

THE SOLUTION: Governor Maura Healey's proposed DRIVE Act makes Massachusetts the first state in the nation to address the Trump administration's politically motivated attacks on higher education. DRIVE (H.4375 An Act to preserve and advance Massachusetts' competitiveness in discovery, research, and innovation for a vibrant economy) is a \$400 million investment, which includes \$200 million from Fair Share Amendment funds specifically earmarked to backfill federal cuts made to public colleges and universities. The funding to public higher education must extend beyond research cuts to also include other jeopardized academic programs and student support services. To further insulate public higher education from attacks coming from the federal government, Massachusetts needs a long-term funding strategy to increase state investment in public colleges and universities. The Legislature and Healey administration can use funds raised by Fair Share to further protect students, faculty and staff at public colleges and universities.

WHY FIGHT: Access to high-quality higher education drives economic and social mobility, making it a crucial tool for reducing systemic inequality rooted in racism. The state's economy also relies on having a highly educated workforce. Since the state created free access to community colleges and other financial assistance programs, enrollment is up in all sectors of public higher education, including more students of color and students older than 25. Many are pursuing degrees and training in STEM fields and other areas linked to the needs of employers. About 78 percent of the students graduating from public colleges and universities stay in Massachusetts, to the benefit of our communities across the state.



**A DIVERSE UNION
of EDUCATION
WORKERS**