According to a report by the State Higher Education Executive Officers, total education revenue per Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) in public higher education from 2007 to 2012 is 7.9% lower than in 2007 and 1.6% lower than in 2011.

The recession beginning in 2008 dramatically reduced state revenue and ended the growth in state and local support achieved between 2004 and 2008. Cash-strapped states across the nation have substantially reduced funding for public colleges and directed funding to primary and secondary schooling, Medicaid, and prisons.

The report states that 36 states are spending less per higher education student in FY2012 than they did in FY2007, after adjusting for inflation. Despite increases in tuition revenue, public higher education has less total revenue per student than in FY2007 in these states. Florida has seen the largest decline in spending, 25.9%, followed by Idaho, 24.6%.

In contrast, fourteen states have increased their total educational revenue per student between FY2007 and FY2012. Illinois took the lead with a 15.6% increase in total education revenue per pupil from FY2007 to FY2012. North Dakota follows closely with a 15.3% increase in spending.