A new report from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) finds that while tuition at public colleges is rising, students - rather than states - are shouldering more of the burden than ever. The GAO report was submitted last month to the outgoing chair of the Senate Education Committee, Sen. Tom Harkin, and evaluates trends in state policies that have affected college affordability.

**Report Highlights: Tuition Up, State Funding Down**

- From fiscal years 2003 through 2012, state funding for all public colleges decreased by 12 percent while median tuition rose 55 percent.
- Median published tuition prices for in-state students at public
Colleges (4-year and 2-year) increased from $3,745 in the 2002/2003 school year to $5,800 in the 2011/2012 school year.

- As state support declined, public colleges began to rely more heavily on student tuition as a revenue source. While student tuition increased from 17 percent of total revenue to 25 percent, revenue from state sources shrunk from 32 percent to 23 percent.
- In fiscal year 2012, tuition surpassed state funding as a revenue source for public colleges.
- The percentage of revenue coming from federal, local and other revenue sources has remained relatively stable.
- As enrollment has grown over the past decade - the number of students enrolled in public colleges rose by 20 percent from the 2002/2003 school year to the 2011/2012 school year - state funding per student fell.
- Median state funding per student declined from $6,211 in fiscal year 2003 to $4,695 in fiscal year 2012 – a 24 percent drop.
- The decline in state funding is likely due to both economic conditions and competing state budget priorities, noting that 19 of 25 experts and organizations the authors interviewed cited the Great Recession as a "factor that directed trends in state funding".

Read more - "Higher Education: State Funding Trends and Policies on Affordability [2]"