

# HB5037



## 104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

HB5037

Introduced 2/10/2026, by Rep. Jeff Keicher

#### SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

New Act

Creates the Fixing Illinois Higher Education Funding Act. Requires the Board of Higher Education to study the cost drivers of State universities and develop a comprehensive, 10-year plan to ensure the long-term performance and sustainability of higher education in the State that ensures funding supports education outcomes, assesses the affordability of higher education for students, and supports long-term economic and workforce development goals. Sets forth factors to be studied. Requires the Board to issue a report based on the findings of the study to the Governor and the General Assembly no later than March 31, 2027. Effective immediately.

LRB104 16718 LNS 30124 b

A BILL FOR

1 AN ACT concerning education.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the Fixing  
5 Illinois Higher Education Funding Act.

6 Section 5. Findings and intent.

7 (a) The General Assembly finds that higher education in  
8 this State has faced dropping enrollment and is facing an  
9 enrollment cliff with declining birth rates, waning public  
10 confidence in bachelor's degrees, and artificial intelligence  
11 rapidly reshaping the entry-level job market for college  
12 graduates and that despite serving fewer students, State  
13 universities are spending more per student than other states  
14 in the country, while in-state tuition continues to increase.

15 (b) It is the intent of the General Assembly that:

16 (1) funding for State universities align with the  
17 needs of their students and toward programs that will  
18 prepare students for long-term success in the labor  
19 market, now and in the future;

20 (2) tuition and fees be affordable for in-state  
21 students and competitive for students from outside the  
22 State; and

23 (3) higher education funding be made transparent to

1 taxpayers and higher education be held accountable for how  
2 those funds are spent.

3 Section 10. Study and report. The Board of Higher  
4 Education shall study the cost drivers of State universities  
5 and develop a comprehensive, 10-year plan to ensure the  
6 long-term performance and sustainability of higher education  
7 in this State that ensures funding supports education  
8 outcomes, assesses the affordability of higher education for  
9 students, and supports long-term economic and workforce  
10 development goals.

11 Section 15. Factors to be studied. In conducting the study  
12 required under Section 5, the Board of Higher Education shall  
13 consider, without limitation:

14 (1) how public funds are spent by each State  
15 university, providing amounts and percentages spent on  
16 categories that include, but are not limited to,  
17 instruction, research, and administration;

18 (2) the historical changes in this State's population  
19 of high school graduates and its relation to higher  
20 education spending;

21 (3) the historical changes of the price of tuition and  
22 fees for higher education in this State compared to that  
23 of other states;

24 (4) the amount of funding provided to State

1 universities compared to the number of students enrolled,  
2 including historical trends;

3 (5) the extent to which State university programs of  
4 study and their funding allocation are aligned with the  
5 needs of the current and future market;

6 (6) the extent to which each State university is  
7 overfunded or underfunded based on the number of students  
8 enrolled compared to other State universities;

9 (7) the extent to which programs are comparatively  
10 overfunded or underfunded based on their alignment with  
11 the current and future marketplace; and

12 (8) the extent to which specialization could attract  
13 more students from within this State and outside this  
14 State and mitigate the competition for students between  
15 State universities.

16 Section 20. Comprehensive report. The Board of Higher  
17 Education shall issue a report based on the findings of the  
18 study as set forth in Sections 10 and 15, which shall include a  
19 10-year plan to increase the affordability of higher education  
20 for students in this State, attract students from other  
21 states, and align funding to student enrollment, workforce  
22 preparation, and the future needs of the labor market. The  
23 Board of Higher Education shall submit its report to the  
24 Governor and the General Assembly no later than March 31,  
25 2027.

1           Section 90. Repealer. This Act is repealed on March 31,  
2           2028.

3           Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon  
4           becoming law.