New Hampshire Residents Strongly Believe State Tax Dollars Should Help Keep Public Colleges Affordable, New UNH Poll Finds

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New Hampshire Residents Strongly Believe State Tax Dollars Should Help Keep Public Colleges Affordable, New UNH Poll Finds

DURHAM, N.H. – Sixty-four percent of Granite State residents did not agree with the state legislature’s decision to cut funding by 50 percent for public colleges and universities in New Hampshire, according to the latest Granite State Poll conducted by the University of New Hampshire Survey Center.

Five hundred eighty one (581) randomly selected New Hampshire adults were interviewed by telephone between Aug. 1 and 12, 2012. The margin of sampling error for the survey is +/- 4.1 percent.

The survey also found that eighty-four percent of those polled believe keeping public colleges affordable is worth an investment in state tax dollars, and 71 percent favor restoring the state funding if in-state tuition rates are frozen at current levels. That number jumps to 81 percent if additional funds are made available for financial aid for lower income students.

The USNH Board of Trustees is expected to vote Sept. 11, 2012, to ask the state legislature to restore funding to $100 million in return for no tuition increase for in-state students for two years.

The survey also revealed that 96 percent of those polled believe it is important to have strong public colleges and universities in the state, and 89 percent believe it is the mission of public higher education to serve the state’s economy by helping young people join its educated workforce.

“These survey results make it clear that the people of New Hampshire support our mission as a land-grant institution to provide affordable access to quality higher education,” said UNH President Mark Huddleston. “The strategic plan we unveiled two years ago put affordability and access at the core of our work moving forward. We have sought to reduce costs and increase non-tuition revenue streams, and access and affordability will remain a central priority, but we need the state legislature to partner with us.”

The UNH Survey Center has conducted survey research projects at the University of New Hampshire since 1976. The center has grown rapidly during the past 30 years and now conducts approximately 40 to 50 major survey projects each year.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New
England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 12,200 undergraduate and 2,300 graduate students.

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