

Good Morning.

Today is a unique day to be at the Capitol. Because yesterday, the concept of public service and self-service collided.

And guess what? Self Service won.

Responsible, long-term management of the state's budget gave way to election year politics.

Open, public discussion on how to manage the deficit gave way to a closed door, muzzled process.

Schools, cities, counties, and some of the most vulnerable people in our state were taken on an election year ride.

All of you are part of higher education and higher education is dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and sound principles.

I congratulate you on your dedication to learning and principle. I hope you will always follow your principles as you strive to be good citizens.

It is on principle that I ran for this job and it is on principle that I will continue to govern.

September 11, 2001 changed our country. The attacks followed by an economic downturn have forced us to rethink our priorities. My administration's priorities are safety, security and sound financial management of the State's resources.

Part of managing the State's finances includes addressing higher education funding. We recognize there is a dilemma between the increased demands placed on higher education during a recession and the need to consider cuts.

We faced this dilemma on principle. My administration has faith in the individual.

And so, while it was necessary to cut institutions, we turned around and put our faith in the individual and proposed INCREASES in student aid.

Every time I'm on a college campus, students ask me why they need to compete for student aid. They want the institution to compete for them.

Changes we made in financial aid last year helped students drive this competition. Our proposal this year furthered this trend for public and PRIVATE college students.

Last night, the House and Senate agreed to a bill that did not fund ANY increased financial aid for private college students.



Their principles must be different than ours.

I believe in education. I believe in higher education. I believe in life-long learning—and I believe in principle.

I hope you will spend today voicing concerns you have about the Legislature's budget fix.

I know I will—on principle.

Thank you and have a good day here at the Capitol.