



NEWS RELEASE

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Alabama's State K-12 Funding Cuts Since 2008 Are Nation's Second Deepest

ACPP's Forrister: Significant Decrease in State's Per-Pupil Funding Could Damage Economic Future

Alabama's cuts to state K-12 education funding since the start of the Great Recession have been the nation's second worst, according to [a study released Thursday by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities \(CBPP\)](#), a nonprofit research organization in Washington, D.C. The cuts have slowed Alabama's economic recovery and could hurt the state's future economic growth, ACPP executive director Kimble Forrister said.

State investments in K-12 education next year, adjusted for inflation, are 20.1 percent below fiscal year (FY) 2008 levels. That means Alabama's state school funding cuts over the last five years will be deeper than in all other states except Oklahoma, the CBPP report finds. In terms of state K-12 dollars spent per student in that time, Alabama's \$1,242 per-pupil funding decrease since FY 2008 is more than \$200 steeper than in any other state, according to the CBPP.

"Good schools and an educated workforce are keys to competing in a global economy," Forrister said. "We only hurt ourselves when we undermine our children's education."

Alabama's per-pupil K-12 spending, adjusted for inflation, is set to increase by 1 percent next year, the CBPP finds. But that increase will restore only a small portion of the state K-12 funding that was cut during the recession and its aftermath. Federal assistance through the Recovery Act temporarily reduced the cuts' impact, but Alabama has raised no significant new revenues to replace that aid since it expired in FY 2011.

K-12 funding cuts could do lasting harm to Alabama's economy, Forrister said. That strategy has slowed the state's recovery by cutting jobs, he said, as school districts across the state laid off teachers and support staff or eliminated those positions through attrition. In the long run, Forrister said, less support for education could leave Alabama with fewer highly skilled workers in the coming decades.

"Education opens the doors of opportunity for hundreds of thousands of low-income Alabamians," Forrister said. "We can't strengthen our state's economy by eroding our foundation for economic growth."

The full CBPP report, "Most States Funding Schools Less Than Before the Recession," is [available here](#).

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Arise Citizens' Policy Project is a nonprofit statewide citizens' organization comprising 145 congregations and organizations that promote public policies to improve the lives of low-income Alabamians.