

It's time for the whiners over in Chapel Hill to zip their lips. North Carolina is doing plenty to support the UNC System, says research conducted by the respected Chronicle of Higher Education.

The magazine found that the North Carolina General Assembly boosted appropriations for the University of North Carolina System by 9.7 percent for the 2005-2006 budget.

That's enough to rank the state fourth in the nation in terms of biggest budget increases. North Carolina trails only Hawaii, where spending was bumped up by 20.1 percent; Alabama, up 14.9 percent; and Montana, up 13.2 percent. The average increase among the states was 5.3 percent.

North Carolina taxpayers contribute roughly \$2.9 billion to the UNC System - the fifth largest amount in the U.S.