



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES
ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEES



February 6, 2008

The Honorable George Miller
Chairman
Committee on Education and Labor
2181 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Miller:

We write on behalf of the presidents and trustees of the nation's community colleges concerning H.R. 4137, the "College Opportunity and Affordability Act of 2007." As you know, our colleges represent the largest sector of higher education and enroll 47% of the nation's undergraduate college students.

Our organizations support H.R. 4137 and urge its passage. The legislation provides many key improvements to the programs authorized by the Higher Education Act (HEA) and creates a number of new programs that will greatly benefit our students and institutions. From our perspective, some of the bill's strongest features include:

- Increasing the authorized Pell Grant maximum to \$9,000, and ensuring that year-round Pell Grants will be provided to certificate and part-time students;
- Helping potential and current college students gain better awareness of the availability of federal student aid;
- Making Academic Competitiveness Grants available to part-time and certificate students as well as permanent resident aliens;
- Rejecting the "single definition" of institution of higher education, and thereby ensuring that the HEA continues to reflect fundamental differences between non-profit and for-profit institutions;
- Providing new assistance for a variety of critical activities undertaken by community colleges, including teacher training, remedial education, rural development, nursing education, and other activities;
- Establishing new targeted assistance for Predominantly Black Institutions and other Minority-Serving Institutions; and
- Facilitating transfer between institutions of higher education.


As with all sweeping legislation of this nature, H.R. 4137 is imperfect. In particular, we believe that the broad array of new reporting requirements will add substantially to institutional expenditures, in many cases without commensurate benefit. Community colleges are

administratively lean by nature and new federal requirements must be judiciously weighed against their cost, since these costs are ultimately borne by students.

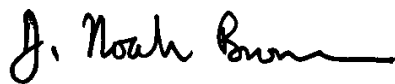
We are also concerned about the bill's evisceration of the "90/10" rule. This is another in a continuing weakening of provisions designed to limit fraud and abuse in the student aid programs, following repeal two years ago of the "50% rule."

Thank you for your leadership in drafting and championing this enormously important legislation. We look forward to working with you to ensure its enactment in a timely fashion.

Sincerely,



George R. Boggs
AACC CEO and President



J. Noah Brown
ACCT CEO and President