



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

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April 24, 2009

Secretary Arne Duncan  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

On behalf of the nation's more than 6,000 publicly appointed and elected leaders who govern the 1,200 community, junior, and technical colleges across the country, we write to express our strong support for President Barack Obama's goals of making higher education an opportunity every American can access and afford. In particular, ACCT supports the Administration's FY2010 budget request proposal to convert the Pell Grant program to an entitlement program with increases based upon the consumer price index plus 1 percent.

In the past several years, the Pell Grant program has seen unprecedented funding increases. Unfortunately, the recent Pell Grant funding increases, through the College Cost Reduction and Access Act and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, are slated to expire. Such expiration would cause significant financial barriers for millions of needy college students if the funding levels are not maintained. Under the Administration's proposal, the so-called "funding cliffs" will be averted.

Specifically, ACCT would like to thank Bob Shireman, Deputy Undersecretary for Education, for briefing our leadership on the nuances of this important change. ACCT is committed to working with you to ensure continued support and maintenance of the Pell Grant program.

As Congress, the Administration and the Department of Education work to enact this change, we ask that special attention be given to community college students. ACCT is particularly concerned about the Pell Grant program participation rates and award levels of part-time community college students. We look forward to working with the Administration to ensure fairness on the part of all program participants.

Thank you again for crafting this proposal. We look forward to working with you to ensure its enactment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Noah Brown". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

J. Noah Brown  
ACCT President & CEO