



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES
ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEES



June 13, 2007

The Honorable Tom Harkin, Chairman
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Arlen Specter, Ranking Member
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Specter:

On behalf of America's community college leadership, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACCC) and the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) request your support for several key programs that are invaluable to the preparation, education, training and support of our nation's workforce.

Representing the CEOs and the trustees of the nation's 1,202 community colleges and the more than 11 million students they educate and train annually, AACCC and ACCT share the same funding priorities for federal student aid and workforce training. Our top priorities are as follows:

- **Raise the Pell Grant Maximum**

Pell Grants are essential to providing access to higher education for low-income students. The program serves more than 5 million students annually, 70 percent of whom come from families with incomes of \$20,000 a year or less. Pell Grants enable more than two million community college students to enroll each year by helping with tuition, books and equipment, and living expenses. We applaud the Appropriations Committee's efforts to increase the Pell Grant maximum by \$260 in FY 2007 and urge Congress to raise the Pell Grant maximum to \$5,100.

- **Increase Funding for the Community-Based Job Training Grants Program to \$250 Million**

Community colleges strongly support the Community-Based Job Training Grants (CBJTG) program, which funds partnerships of community colleges, business, and workforce investment boards seeking to train workers for high-demand, high growth industries such as health care, advanced manufacturing, and construction. Community colleges badly need this infusion of resources to address the local and national workforce training needs. AACCC and ACCT urge Congress to restore the appropriation for this program to its originally appropriated level of \$250 million.

- **Provide \$100 million for the Strengthening Institutions Program (Title III-A of HEA)**

Title III-A provides invaluable support to institutions that serve high proportions of low-income and historically underrepresented populations. Over recent years, the population of low-income students served by these institutions has grown in number and in need, and the resources of these schools have been stretched razor thin. In order to allow these institutions to continue to provide high quality educational opportunity for thousands of students and to prepare our future workforce, Congress should increase funding for the Strengthening Institutions Program by \$20.5 million, to \$100 million.

- **Appropriate \$1.7 Billion for Career and Technical Education**

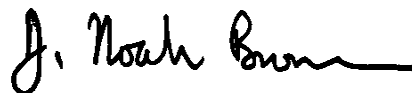
The Basic State Grant of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act provides critical workforce development funding. Community colleges use these grants for a variety of purposes, including innovative occupational education curricula; helping students meet challenging academic and technical standards; training first responders; purchasing equipment; supporting professional development; and strengthening links between institutions and businesses. We urge Congress to help us meet the demands of the workforce and the economy by appropriating \$1.7 billion for career and technical education programs, including \$1.5 billion for the Perkins Basic State Grant and a minimum of \$105 million for the Tech Prep program.

Continuous training and education are essential to maintaining the nation's global economic leadership and standard of living. A strengthened federal commitment to these efforts is essential for community colleges struggling to keep pace with the growing demands of the economy and an expanding student population.

Most respectfully,



George R. Boggs
AACC President and CEO



J. Noah Brown
ACCT President and CEO

cc: Members of the Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee