



November 10, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
S-230, U.S. Capitol  
Washington D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Schumer:

On behalf of the nation's community college chief executive officers and trustees, we write to state our strong support for the Build Back Better Act. The legislation would strengthen the ability of students to attend and succeed at community college, and help institutions continue to provide high-quality programs and needed student supports. It would make postsecondary education more affordable to millions more Americans and open the door to jobs with family-sustaining wages.

We applaud this \$40 billion investment in higher education and workforce programs. It is a timely investment as the nation struggles to emerge from the economic crisis caused by the ongoing pandemic. We are particularly appreciative of the following provisions:

- **Pell Grant Maximum:** The \$550 increase in the Pell Grant maximum for four years for students attending public or private nonprofit institutions will greatly increase community college affordability. Coupled with what we hope will be a \$400 increase in the maximum grant through the FY 2022 appropriations process, it would represent the single largest one-year increase ever in the grant.
- **Pell Grant Tax Liability:** The legislation would exclude Pell Grants from taxation for four years, providing relief for the hundreds of thousands of community college Pell grant recipients who use grants to cover the cost of attendance beyond tuition and fees.
- **Community College Workforce Partnerships:** This \$5 billion program responds to the nation's longstanding skills gap by augmenting community colleges' workforce roles. The program's design reflects previous successful federal workforce programs.
- **TAACCCT:** The Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College Career Training (TAACCCT) Grants enabled community colleges to expand and improve their workforce education programs, helping the country recover from the Great Recession and reskilling workers for the 21st Century. The nation again has a pressing need to assist those impacted by the rapidly changing economy. The legislation will be instrumental in meeting that need by reinvesting in the TAACCCT program.
- **Federal Support for Dreamers:** The legislation makes DACA students eligible for Higher Education Act Title IV student aid. This is a longstanding priority for colleges across the country and would help hundreds of thousands of people to attain the American dream.



- Student Success Grants: This state-based grant program will lead to enhanced outcomes at community colleges. The legislation's focus on evidence-based approaches reflects growing consensus about what works best in helping students succeed. However, these interventions are costly, which makes new support so helpful.

We look forward to enactment of this critical legislation. Please let us know if you have any questions about how it will benefit community colleges and their students.

Sincerely,

---

Walter G. Bumphus, Ph.D.  
President and CEO, AACC

---

Jee Hang Lee  
President and CEO, ACCT