



February 26, 2018

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chairman  
Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee  
Committee on Appropriations  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Frelinghuysen and Cole and Ranking Members Lowey and DeLauro:

On behalf of the nation's more than 1,100 community colleges, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) request your continued support for essential programs that create higher education opportunity and prepare the nation's workforce. Given the additional resources provided in the recent budget agreement, we wish to supplement our earlier request to focus on a few key priorities for community colleges and students in fiscal year (FY) 2018.

Community colleges urge Congress to not rescind any of the Pell Grant reserve fund as in the House and Senate's FY 2018 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education funding bills. Using the reserve to finance other programs threatens the programs' future stability and could result in future grant aid cuts if the program were to experience an increase in demand or costs. The Administration's recent FY 2018 budget request addendum also reflects this priority by cancelling a proposed \$3.9 billion rescission.

We urge you to address the surplus rescission via the subcommittee's general allocation and reserve the additional \$2 billion in funds specified in the budget agreement for new student aid investments. A priority should be set to use these funds to assist our neediest students and families. More than seven million students received a Pell Grant in the 2016-2017 academic year; nearly one-third of them attended community college. Despite our sector's comparatively low tuition and fees, the maximum Pell Grant only covers one-third of the average cost of attendance for a full-time community college student. Strengthening the Pell Grant program will increase affordability and reduce borrowing for our lowest-income students.

We urge you to increase the maximum Pell Grant award in the final FY 2018 funding bill. Thankfully, the Senate proposed a \$100 increase in its FY 2018 subcommittee bill, which reflected last summer's inflationary increase under the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U). However, in recent years, until FY 2018, mandatory funds have annually increased the Pell Grant by December CPI-U. We request that you use the most recent inflationary percentages, increasing the Pell Grant maximum by \$125 for the 2018-2019 academic year.

Additionally, we propose a large increase to the Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) program. The CCAMPIS program supports the participation of low-income parents in postsecondary education by providing campus-based child care services. Multi-year grants are awarded through a competitive process to institutions that enroll large numbers of Pell Grant recipients. In addition to campus-based child care for infants and toddlers, the program also funds before- and after-school care for older children. The Administration's FY 2018 budget addendum calls for increased funding for CCAMPIS to triple the number of institutions currently receiving grants. Accessing child care is a significant barrier for many of our students, and current funding only supports a small fraction of colleges needing support. The need clearly justifies further investments in this program, even well beyond what the administration has proposed.

We also propose increasing to \$100 million funding for the Higher Education Act Title III-A, Strengthening Institutions program. These funds help colleges expand their capacity to serve low-income students by improving and strengthening the academic quality, institutional management, and fiscal stability of eligible institutions. A majority of program funds are received by community colleges. Priority is given to evidence-based proposals, and many recent grantees have focused on improving student completion. These completion focused grants are typically based off the City University of New York's (CUNY'S) Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP), which incorporate financial, academic, and personal supports for academically at-risk students. Additional funds are needed, as demand for grants under this program far exceeds available federal resources.

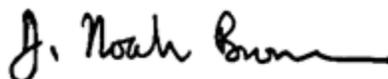
In addition to these areas of focus, community colleges strongly support an increase of \$13 million for the Adult Basic Education state grants, one of the few programs that did not recover fully from its 2013 sequester cuts. We urge an increase of 2.1%, equal to last year's inflation rate, for other priorities, including the Perkins Career and Technical Education state grants, workforce education programs authorized by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, Federal Work Study, international education, the federal TRIO and GEAR UP programs, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Predominantly Black Institutions, Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions, and other programs supporting Minority Serving Institutions and Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Cuts to these programs could have a devastating impact on student access and success.

We thank you for your consideration and look forward to working with the committee as it finalizes funding for FY 18.

Sincerely,



Walter G. Bumphus  
AACC President and CEO



J. Noah Brown  
ACCT President and CEO