

2018 COMMUNITY COLLEGE FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

REAUTHORIZE THE HIGHER EDUCATION ACT

Pell Grants - Provide Pell Grant eligibility for students enrolled in short-term, workforce-oriented programs. Index Pell Grants to inflation. Fully reinstate Pell Grant eligibility for “Ability-to-Benefit” students. Allow Pell Grants to be used for up to 14 full-time equivalent semesters.

Short-term workforce development programs allow students to quickly and cost-efficiently increase their skill levels and earning potentials.

Increasing the maximum Pell Grant award helps ensure that low-income students can attend college, while reducing the need for borrowing.

Risk Sharing - Oppose additional federal financial assessments levied on institutions that are based on borrowing, student aid, or educational outcomes.

Community colleges oppose risk sharing, including changes to R2T4 included in the House’s PROSPER Act.

Community colleges do not have the resources to absorb large federal financial penalties. Implementation of risk sharing at community colleges would inevitably result in either increased costs or reduced educational services for students.

Federal Loans - Link loan limits to enrollment intensity as well as degree and program type. Revise student loan cohort default rates by incorporating the percentage of a college’s students who borrow. Simplify and consolidate Direct Loan repayment options with low-debt borrowers in mind. Enhance student loan servicing. Maintain subsidized federal loans for low-income students.

Support the House PROSPER Act’s provisions that will give colleges new authority to limit borrowing.

Oppose the elimination of subsidized student loans in the PROSPER Act.

Transparency and Measurements - Create a national student unit record data system to efficiently track completion and post-college earnings. Track completion for up to 300% of a program’s “normal time.”

An effectively implemented unit record data system would reduce administrative costs as well as produce more relevant and comprehensive data than are currently being generated.

Campus-Based Aid and Institutional Aid - Community colleges oppose the PROSPER Act’s elimination of Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG) and the Strengthening Institutions program (Title III-A). The allocation formulas for Federal Work-Study and SEOG should ensure that needy students at all institutions have equitable access to funds.

The elimination of federal SEOG will increase costs for millions of college students and families.

Title III-A provides critical resources for institutions serving high numbers of low-income and first-generation students.

Community colleges oppose the PROSPER Act’s application of a minimum graduation rate for Minority Serving Institutions to qualify for grants under Titles III and V.

INVEST IN EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Provide Sufficient Funding for Higher Education and Workforce Development - Higher education and workforce training investments generate significant economic and social dividends.

Congress must adequately fund the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education funding bill to provide necessary support for key community college programs.

Ensure Pell Grant Funds Benefit Students - The Pell Grant surplus should be used solely to support students in the Pell program. Raiding the surplus could impact the future stability of the program.

Community colleges encourage Congress to use the Pell Grant reserve funds in a fiscally responsible manner to enhance college affordability for our diverse student population.

Federal Student Aid and Institutional Aid - Congress should provide additional funding for the SEOG, Federal Work-Study, TRIO, and GEAR UP programs. Congress should increase current funding for institutional aid programs, including: Title III-A; Strengthening Historically Black Colleges and Universities; the Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions programs; and other programs serving traditionally underrepresented populations.

Adult Basic Education, Perkins CTE, and WIOA - Congress should increase funding for Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, Adult Basic and Literacy Education state grants, and state grants under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to support needs in these areas.

CCAMPIS and the National Science Foundation's ATE program - The Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) program and NSF's Advanced Technological Education (ATE) program provide critical resources for community college students. Congress should increase funding for these key programs.

Invest in Workers to Build Our Nation's Infrastructure - Proposals to invest in our nation's infrastructure have the potential of creating thousands of new jobs. Employers report shortages of qualified workers for a range of jobs in construction, welding, HVAC, engineering, information technology, and other infrastructure-related fields.

Any federal infrastructure investment plan should include funding to support partnerships between community colleges and businesses to train workers in these high-need fields.

DEFERRED ACTION FOR CHILDHOOD ARRIVALS AND THE DREAM ACT

Support Dreamers - Community colleges encourage Congress and the Administration to quickly enact the Dream Act or similar legislation that provides Dreamers with permanent legal status and an eventual path to citizenship.

DACA provides educational and career opportunities for undocumented young people who were brought to the U.S. as minors and who frequently have no ties to the countries from which they came.

The DACA phase-out leaves thousands of young people, including many students, in a precarious status.

In addition to changing their immigration status, the DACA rescission will curtail the ability of these individuals to work lawfully and, in some instances, to receive in-state tuition.

REAUTHORIZE THE PERKINS CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION ACT

Focus Postsecondary Support on Sub-Baccalaureate Program - Making baccalaureate programs eligible for Perkins funds would inappropriately change the program's emphasis and diminish the support for associate degree and certificate programs focused on high-demand middle-skill jobs.

Support Highly Effective CTE Programs - Reauthorization should emphasize the importance of strong connections between Perkins recipients and local, regional, and statewide businesses and industries.

Streamline CTE Reporting Requirements - Streamline and better align the postsecondary performance indicators with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).