AACC-ACCT JOINT LEGISLATIVE AGENDA FOR THE 111TH CONGRESS

Appropriations

• Provide increases to the Federal Pell Grant program to ensure greater access to higher education for millions of academically qualified but financially disadvantaged students.
• Support major federal student aid programs, including Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG) and Federal Work-Study, that enhance community college student enrollment.
• Increase funding for vital institutional programs, including the Strengthening Institutions (Title III-A of the HEA) program, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, TRIO, GEAR UP, Predominantly Black Institutions.
• Increase the federal investment in career and technical education (CTE) in the Carl Perkins Act and job training in the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Provide greater resources for the Community-Based Job Training Grants program.
• Support new Higher Education Act programs impacting veterans, rural colleges, and articulation between institutions and states.

Higher Education Act (HEA) Reauthorization Implementation

• Monitor the impact on campuses and students of compliance with the reauthorized HEA; develop legislative proposals to address unanticipated consequences and undue administrative burdens.
• Influence the Negotiated Rulemaking sessions that will develop regulations for all changes to the federal student financial assistance programs.

Veterans

• Support funding to help institutions serve the particular needs of students who are veterans.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Reauthorization

• Create a competitive state grant program to facilitate the creation and expansion of early college high school initiatives.
• Make community colleges active participants in Title II, Part A Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting Grants.

Using the Tax Code to Finance Higher Education

• Consolidate the Hope and Lifetime Learning tax credits and tuition deduction into one unified credit; expand overall benefits.
• Make higher education tax credits refundable and include non-tuition expenses.
• Target assistance on students with the greatest financial need.
**DREAM Act**

- Grant undocumented students that are long-time U.S. residents legal residency status and eliminate federal restrictions on states that wish to offer in-state tuition to undocumented students.
- Make DREAM Act students eligible for federal student financial assistance.

**STEM Competitiveness**

- Include community colleges in efforts to bolster America’s competitiveness in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields.
- Enhance funding for the Advanced Technological Education (ATE) program. ATE provides funds to community college programs that produce skilled technicians.
- Increase funding for the STEM Talent Expansion (STEP) program, which increases the quality of undergraduate math and science programs and the quantity of students that enroll in them.

**International Education Programs**

**Higher Education Act Title VI and Fulbright-Hays Programs**

- Increase funding for undergraduate international education programs, which are vital to national security and economic productivity.

**International Students**

- Ensure a secure student visa system without placing undue burdens and delays upon international students who wish to study at community colleges.
- Increase opportunities for community college students to study abroad and encourage international students to enroll at community colleges.

**Workforce Investment Act Reauthorization**

- Ease the burden of data collection and increase community college involvement in the federal workforce development system by reducing reporting requirements for training providers.
- Establish the Community-Based Job Training Grants program in statute and make community colleges the sole grantees for training and program development in high need areas.
- Fund the workforce system’s infrastructure with minimal or no impact on funding for mandatory program partners.
- Provide funding for training programs outside of the voucher-based framework and eliminating the “sequence of services” that emphasizes quick job placement and informational services.
Trade Adjustment Assistance

- Extend eligibility to workers in the service sector, who are also affected by trade and foreign competition.
- Increase the cap on training funds to provide an appropriate level of support for eligible workers in need of retraining.
- Ensure that program participants can use benefits to pursue postsecondary degrees and certificates.

Sustainability

- Use community colleges as a resource to provide education and training in sustainable energy fields. Fund HEA programs that help meet these goals, and support related new programs.
- Support legislation that reduces colleges' dependence on high cost fuels through energy efficient and renewable energy technologies.

Allied Health & Nursing Legislation

- Provide resources to nursing and allied health programs at, and graduates from, two-year institutions, including amendments to the Public Health Service Act, Title VIII (nursing education programs). Secure equitable funding for community colleges and make them eligible to receive grants for the purpose of expanding nursing enrollments.
- Protect scope of practice and prevent career advancement barriers for graduates from 2-year institutions, including those employed by federal agencies.

Homeland Security

- Support legislation and funding that recognizes the critical role community colleges play in educating and training first responders.
- Enhance community college opportunities to partner with federal agencies and the private sector to provide homeland security education and training.

Rural Economic Development

- Support programs that recognize the critical role community colleges play in fostering rural economic development.
- Provide adequate federal resources for such essential programs as rural education, rural health care, renewable energy, and rural workforce development.
**Welfare Reform**

- Support modifications to the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Program that expand the vocational education time limit from 12 months to at least 24 months, to enable TANF recipients to complete training programs and gain the necessary skills to secure employment.

**Facilities**

- Support legislation that provides matching grants to states to assist community colleges in meeting the needs of expanding student populations and modernizing their facilities.

**Service Learning and Community Engagement**

- Increase funding for Learn and Serve America and the Corporation for National and Community Service to expand service learning opportunities for students of all ages.
- Include priority points for community colleges in Learn and Serve America funding.

**Older Students**

- Improve education and training for a maturing workforce by tailoring federal programs to meet its unique needs and preferences; help colleges provide life-long learning opportunities for the older segment of the population.