

# Community College Federal Legislative Priorities

## Enhance Federal Funding for Community Colleges and Students

- Maintain the FY14 funding level for the Pell Grant program, which, combined with mandatory funding, will provide a projected \$100 increase in the maximum award next year.
- Reinstate funding for the Perkins CTE program to pre-sequester levels. This would require an increase over the current (FY14) level.
- Reinvest in the Adult Basic Education program, starting with restoring sequester cuts in FY15.
- Bolster funding for the HEA Title III-A Strengthening Institutions program, along with funding for the other Title III programs and Title V, Hispanic-Serving Institutions.
- Preserve funding, at a minimum, for the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, Federal Work-Study, TRIO, GEAR UP, the NSF ATE program, and the Workforce Investment Act job training programs.

## Strengthen the Pell Grant Program

- Restore Pell Grant eligibility for “ability-to-benefit” students and reinstate the year-round Pell Grant.
- Increase the maximum number of semesters that a student can remain eligible for a Pell Grant from 12 to 14 semesters.

## Improve the Higher Education Act

- Simplify the application process for federal student financial aid and expand eligibility for nontraditional students.

- Give institutions more tools to limit unnecessary student loan indebtedness and lower aggregate loan limits for community college students.
- Change the calculation for federal student loan cohort default rates to factor in the low borrowing rates at community colleges.
- Improve consumer information to help prospective students and their parents with the college and program selection process.
- Encourage states to maintain higher education funding for public colleges and universities.

## Improve Higher Education Tax Incentives

- Pass the Student and Family Tax Simplification Act and similar efforts to streamline, improve, and extend tax-based aid.
- Preserve the charitable deduction, since donations to community college foundations provide critical funding for programs and scholarships.
- Renew benefits associated with the IRA charitable rollover, which allows older individuals to donate up to \$100,000 from their Roth IRA accounts to public charities, including community colleges.

## Expand Job Training Opportunities at Community Colleges

- Enact dedicated federal support for job training at community colleges to replace the expiring TAACCCT grants.

## **Help Community Colleges Better Serve Veteran Students**

- Increase funding for the Centers of Excellence for Veterans Student Success and Veterans Upward Bound under the Federal TRIO programs. Continue the Veterans Administration's Veterans Retraining Assistance Program.

## **Reauthorize the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act**

- Establish uniform accountability measures within the Perkins CTE programs and across related programs, drawing from the Voluntary Framework of Accountability.
- Increase focus on high-quality CTE programs at the national level while preserving flexibility at the local and state levels to deliver these programs.
- Facilitate, but not require, secondary/postsecondary consortia.
- Make the Perkins CTE application process more rigorous, particularly with regards to showing the

alignment between funded programs and industry needs, rather than requiring competitive grants.

## **Pass the DREAM Act**

- Provide an expedited path to citizenship for undocumented students who were brought to this country as children.
- Remove the federal ban on offering in-state tuition to undocumented students.