December 2, 2009

The Honorable John B. Larson
106 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Larson:

I write on behalf of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), which represents more than 1,100 of the nation’s community colleges. I would like to thank you for your imminent introduction of the “Community College Emergency Stabilization Act.” This legislation will provide desperately needed financial support to our campuses at a time when they are struggling, and often failing, to meet the needs of the waves of students that have turned to them for the education and related services they so badly need. We continue to hear disturbing reports of students effectively being denied access to our colleges.

Nationally, we believe that our colleges have seen enrollment increases into the double digits over just the last year. Significantly, there is a relatively high percentage increase of full-time students. At the same time, colleges have seen their state and local funding slashed virtually everywhere. This dire situation, coupled with the overall economic crisis, make your legislation so welcome. Our colleges are in desperate need of the resources that your legislation would provide. The focus on providing funding for faculty and staff is appropriate given that a majority of college expenditures fall into that category. We agree with you that the legislation should ensure that it does not in any way allow states to slacken current levels of support for community colleges.

We thank you again for your introduction of the Community College Emergency Stabilization Act and stand ready to work with you to ensure its enactment and funding.

Sincerely,

George R. Boggs
CEO and President