



March 13, 2018

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
Room H-305, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Room H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Room S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Room S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Ryan, Leader Pelosi, Leader McConnell, and Leader Schumer:

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 support for providing additional investments in community college facilities and workforce training programs to expand the number of skilled workers necessary to upgrade our nation's infrastructure.

President Trump's proposed \$200 billion in federal infrastructure investments, the Senate Democrats' \$1 trillion infrastructure plan, and February's bipartisan budget deal, which provided \$10 billion in each of the next two fiscal years for this purpose, raises hopes for dramatically upgrading our nation's infrastructure, including community college facilities. However, any funding must include a corresponding investment in workforce development programs, as newly skilled workers will be required to build, operate, and maintain large-scale infrastructure projects.

Community colleges presently educate students in the fields identified as top priorities in both the executive and legislative branches: surface transportation and airports, water and wastewater, hydropower, and other activities. These projects will require specific skills in a plethora of areas. Additional support for short-term workforce-oriented programs and degree programs is needed to ensure additional skilled workers are available to support these projects. Furthermore, a key benefit provided by community colleges is the fact that approximately two-thirds of community colleges serve rural areas, which is a priority in the administration's proposal and shared by many members of Congress.

Community colleges' ability to deliver state-of-the-art-technical education is tightly linked to having up-to-date facilities and the fixed equipment and educational resources that go with them. In addition to support for program development, we call for funds to upgrade community college facilities and provide the resources

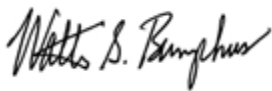
and equipment necessary to train individuals in these high need fields. The collective facility needs of community colleges are massive, ranging well over \$30 billion, but federal investments can play a key role, in part by leveraging other funds. Community colleges are heartened to see \$10 billion set aside for community college infrastructure in the Senate Democrat's proposal. Any new community college role in catalyzing a new federal infrastructure effort will augment ongoing community college workforce development efforts and generate broader economic output.

Given the multi-billion need for capital improvement, capacity building, and program development, community colleges request a significant federal investment in this area. Projects should be awarded on the basis of relative need as determined by states. Funds for capital improvement should be available for new facility construction as well as renovation. It is essential that that smaller, rural-serving institutions have sufficient access to funding.

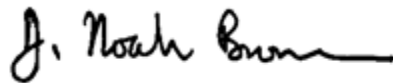
Program development through any new infrastructure investments must engage business and industry in expanding, modernizing, and otherwise improving community colleges' ability to educate the workforce for for in-demand jobs. This could be achieved by creating a successor to the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training Grant program. Program funds need to be flexible and should include faculty and curriculum development to align programs with industry needs; equipment acquisition; development of innovative program designs, such as competency-based models, apprenticeships, and other workplace learning; and facilitation of broad-based college/business coalitions, including sector-based initiatives.

New infrastructure efforts cannot be fully realized without tapping community colleges' workforce development capabilities. Our institutions are eager to help move our nation's economy forward and provide a solid basis for continued productivity and prosperity. We thank you for your consideration and look forward to working with you as Congress develops legislation to invest in our nation's infrastructure.

Sincerely,



Walter G. Bumphus
AACC President and CEO



J. Noah Brown
ACCT President and CEO

cc: The Honorable John Cornyn, Majority Whip, U.S. Senate
The Honorable Richard Durbin, Minority Whip, U.S. Senate
The Honorable Kevin McCarthy, Majority Leader, U.S. House
The Honorable Steny Hoyer, Democratic Whip, U.S. House
The Honorable Virginia Foxx, Chair, U.S. House Committee on Education and the Workforce
The Honorable Bobby Scott, Ranking Member, U.S. House Committee on Education and the Workforce
The Honorable Lamar Alexander, Chair, U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
The Honorable Patty Murray, Ranking Member, U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

The Honorable Tom Cole, Chair, U.S. House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member, U.S. House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education

The Honorable Bill Shuster, Chair, U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

The Honorable Peter DeFazio, Ranking Member, U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

The Honorable John Barrasso, Chair, U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works

The Honorable Thomas Carper, Ranking Member, U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works