The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

U.S. Senate

Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_:

On behalf of [institution name], I am writing to urge you to support community college priorities in any upcoming economic stimulus legislation to be considered in the Senate. With federal support, my institution is poised to play a vital role in the nation’s economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic. The top community college priorities for the next stimulus bill are:

**$46.6 Billion for Community Colleges/Higher Education Institutions**

* The Senate should provide at least $46.6 billion for higher education in the fourth stimulus bill. Maintaining community college viability is essential to the country’s economic and social well-being, in both the short and long term. The requested amount will only begin to help institutions address their added costs and lost revenue as a result of the pandemic. In allocating any formula funds to institutions, the Senate should use the per-student, headcount-based formula in H.R. 6800 and funds should be provided directly to institutions from the U.S. Department of Education (ED).
* Legislation should enable institutions to use funds to backfill dramatic drops in public support and declining enrollments, while supporting students and modifying campus activities to adapt to COVID-19. The relevant language in H.R. 6800 achieves those ends.
* The language on student emergency grants in H.R. 6800 is fairer and will work more efficiently than that in the CARES Act. Senate legislation should retroactively apply this language to CARES Act grants as well as any additional student-focused funding that may be provided.
* The legislation should contain tough but realistic maintenance-of-effort provisions. States should be required to continue to devote no less than the same percentage of their budgets (including any stabilization resources provided to them through the stimulus 4.0 legislation) that they provided to higher education (including need-based student aid) in fiscal year (FY) 2019.

**Establish Dedicated Community College Job Training Funding**

Community colleges can help train the millions of individuals ravaged by the recession but will need substantial support to meet this enormous task. Workforce programs are particularly costly and difficult to deliver in the current environment, making federal support imperative. $1 billion should be allocated for this purpose in each of FYs 2020 and 2021, with funds available through FY 2023. Programs would need to be aligned with local business priorities, and institutions would need to specify the number of individuals who would be trained, the programs supported, and the expected labor market outcomes. Priority should be given to individuals who have either lost employment or suffered financial distress because of COVID-19. Dedicated community college workforce education programs historically have received, and continue to receive, strong bipartisan support from both the Legislative and Executive Branches.

**Temporarily Alter the Lifetime Learning Tax Credit to Cover $2,000 in Workforce-Oriented Training**

The Lifetime Learning Tax Credit (LLC) needs to focus on helping individuals develop job-oriented skills, providing opportunity as the economy recovers. Through the end of 2022, the LLC should cover 100% of an individual’s first $2,000 of tuition and qualified expenses. Currently, the LLC is overwhelmingly beneficial for graduate and professional students, at the expense of working community college students.

Please let me know if you have any questions about these priorities and their impact on my students and college.

Sincerely,