



COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA

Federal Advocacy

January 2017

Reducing Financial Barriers to Higher Education

Despite having the largest free community college tuition program in the country, California's community college students still face substantial financial obstacles to degree completion. Over a third of our students experience housing insecurity and 12% are faced with food scarcity. Without Pell Grant program reforms, our students will be forced to take fewer classes, work longer hours and ultimately be less academically successful.

Support Improvements to Pell Grants by:

- Reinstating year-round Pell Grants.
- Increasing Pell Grant eligibility from 12 semesters to 14.
- Indexing Pell Grants with inflation.
- Simplifying the FASFA to increase completion.

Protecting Vulnerable Students - The California Dreamers

As a state, we have ensured that all Californians - regardless of where they were born - have access to a quality education. By equitably treating all of its residents, California has opened a path to the middle class. To continue to build on these important efforts to protect students who have applied for temporary work permits through the Deferred Action/Childhood Arrival (DACA) program we ask Congress to:

- Allow students currently in the DACA program to continue to receive work permits.
- Not cut off Title IV funding for colleges that provide in-state tuition or equitable financial aid eligibility to all students, regardless of their immigration status.
- Make DREAM act students eligible for federal financial aid.

Regulatory Relief - Help Colleges Focus on Educating Our Students

The federal government can and should play an oversight role in ensuring community colleges provide a quality education to all students. However, colleges are forced to spend valuable teaching resources on processing and reporting metrics required by the

federal government. We ask Congress to consider the below regulations to allow colleges to focus more on education and less on administrative tasks:

- Create an official federal six-year graduation rate for community colleges.
- Ensure that any new rules regarding risk sharing or cohort default rate sanctions provide flexibility for colleges with very low number of borrowers.
- Implement a federal student unit record system for Title IV eligible institutions that can accurately track a student through their collegiate career.
- Align various reporting and outcome standards contained in the Higher Education Act, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act.

Colleges – An Essential Part of Our County’s Infrastructure

President Trump has emphasized the importance of updating our nation’s infrastructure as an economic stimulus. By providing resources for community college facilities through an infrastructure stimulus plan, jobs would be created both immediately and in the long-term. Colleges also play a vital role in training the workforce to rebuild America’s infrastructure.

Colleges have significant facility needs. The California Community College’s Office estimates that over the next 10 years our colleges will need to spend \$28 Billion to either update or build new facilities. A stimulus plan that includes colleges would help build state of the art facilities, ensure classrooms meet the needs of the 21st workforce, and help colleges better serve growing populations of students such as veterans.

A Workforce for the 21st Century

Community colleges play a vital role in training workers for American jobs. Through a continued partnership with the federal government, California’s community colleges will help provide the job training needed to build economic growth in the 21st century. To ensure that this successful partnership continues, the following programs should be restored to their pre-sequestration levels of Fiscal Year 2016, adjusted for inflation:

- Perkins Act Grants – These resources help both high school and community colleges offer career technical education courses and it incentivizes the two systems to build strong partnerships.
- Workforce, Innovation and Opportunity Act Programs: Provide vital funding for job training to dislocated workers, low-income adults and at-risk youth.