



June 26, 2026

The Honorable Susan Collins
Chair
Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Patty Murray
Vice Chair
Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Chair
Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Ranking Member
Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee

Re: Community College Federal Funding Priorities

Dear Chairs Collins and Capito, Vice Chair Murray, and Ranking Member Baldwin:

On behalf of the nation's 1,015 community colleges, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) request your continued support for programs that enhance higher education success and help prepare the nation's workforce.

As the committee drafts its fiscal year 2027 (FY 27) Labor, HHS and Education (LHHS-ED) appropriations bill, we encourage you to retain the positive aspects of the House-committee approved version of the bill, while rejecting the deep cuts that bill made to many programs that directly impact community college students.

The Federal Pell Grant Program

Community colleges' top priority for the FY 27 LHHS-ED appropriations bill is a permanent solution to the program's current funding shortfall. The shortfall is largely driven by the successful policies of the FASFA Simplification Act, which both facilitated an increase in applications and expanded student eligibility.

The House committee-approved FY 27 LHHS-ED appropriations bill provided \$16.3 billion of "mandatory for discretionary" funding that would address the shortfall through FY 27 only. Not only is this a temporary "fix," it is paid for by permanently ending subsidized Direct Loans for undergraduate students.

Congress must address the shortfall by providing sufficient resources to close the gap in FY 27 and succeeding years. Adding funds to the program's appropriation is a multi-year solution and largely resolves funding concerns for the foreseeable future. Addressing the shortfall in this way requires a sufficiently increased 302(b) allocation for the LHHS-ED subcommittee. We call on the committee to provide such an allocation. President Trump's request of \$10.5 billion in appropriations to close the shortfall gap is a welcome step in advancing this essential policy.

Strengthening Community College Training Grants

Community colleges strongly support the Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grant (SCCTG) program, which has been funded at \$65 million for the last three years. SCCTG provides campuses with direct support for expanded workforce training capacity that allows them to meet the demand for skilled workers in varied industries nationwide. We recommend increasing SCCTG funding by \$10 million in FY 27 to \$75 million, as was done in the House bill.



Support Under-Resourced Institutions and Students

The Higher Education Act Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP, Title III-A) helps community colleges and other institutions serve low-income students by providing funds to improve academic quality, institutional management, and fiscal stability. We applaud the House committee for increasing this program by \$10 million in FY 27, which partially restores cuts made in recent years. This increase is important, especially since most of the Title III and V programs are likely to be awarded through a “super-sized” SIP competition again in FY 27.

Additional Community College Funding Priorities

We strongly urge the committee to reject the deep cuts and program eliminations to key programs in the House bill and include at least level funding for Adult Basic Education, Strengthening Educational Opportunity Grants, Federal Work Study and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act formula programs. We support the House bill’s increases provided to TRIO, GEAR-UP, Perkins Career and Technical Education, and Apprenticeships, and the bill’s protection of Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) and Postsecondary Student Success Grants (PSSG). We also support the House’s language that requires the Administration to retain the traditional core features of the TRIO programs, and that requires ED to count advanced nursing programs as “professional” degrees. We hope the committee will retain these positive provisions in the Senate legislation.

We thank you for your consideration and look forward to working with the committee during the FY 27 appropriations process.

Sincerely,

DeRionne P. Pollard
AACCC President and CEO

Jee Hang Lee
ACCT President and CEO