

COMMUNITY COLLEGE ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS TRUSTEES FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES 2020

The Community College Association of Texas Trustees (CCATT) joins the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) in calling for members of Congress to support legislation aimed at ensuring affordable and accessible pathways to higher education, career training, and economic mobility for today's workforce.

REAUTHORIZE THE HIGHER EDUCATION ACT

As Congress considers the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965, as amended, CCATT and ACCT emphasize the following policy priorities.

INCREASE THE PELL GRANT MAXIMUM AWARD

Increase the maximum award to help diminish the cost of attendance for low-income students, while also reducing their need to borrow.

- Through the reauthorization of HEA, Congress should boost the maximum grant and provide annual inflationary increases to the maximum award using mandatory funding.

SHORT-TERM PELL GRANTS

Lower the threshold for Pell Grant eligibility to 150 clock hours to enable more individuals to access training programs for jobs in high-need fields.

- Community colleges offer many short-term, high quality workforce programs which do not currently qualify for Pell Grants because they are less than two-thirds of a year in length (or 600 clock hours) and/or 15 weeks. Eligibility for shorter-term programs should be established, with appropriate safeguards.

SECOND CHANCE PELL GRANTS

Authorize Pell Grants for incarcerated individuals to assist in reducing recidivism and unemployment among formerly incarcerated individuals.

- Scores of community and technical colleges partner with correctional institutions to offer postsecondary programs for incarcerated individuals. However, incarcerated individuals have been prohibited from using Pell Grants to cover tuition, fees, and course materials.

ENHANCE TRANSPARENCY AND DATA

Create a national student unit record data system, which can accurately track completion and transfer and well as the earnings of graduates.

- An effectively implemented unit record data system will reduce administrative costs, in part by eliminating redundancy in the data currently reported to federal, state, local and private entities. This will enhance the accountability of the nation's postsecondary education system and allow prospective students, as well as policymakers, to make better decisions about postsecondary education.

INVEST IN EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

With more than two million jobs created in 2019 and the unemployment rate at 3.5 % (December 2019), America's 21st century workforce is benefiting from a period of economic stability. In an effort to maintain these positive trends, CCATT and ACCT support investment in education and workforce development. Through these legislative efforts, all students will be able to possess the skills needed to achieve family-wage, middle-skill jobs.

SUPPORT STUDENT ACCESS AND SUCCESS

Support programs such as, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG), Federal Work-Study, TRIO, GEAR UP, and Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS), which make higher education and workforce training affordable and accessible programs.

- Federal programs are critical to improving access to higher education and workforce development opportunities for community college students across the nation.

STRENGTHEN UNDER-RESOURCED INSTITUTIONS

Increase funding for institutional aid programs, including: Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), Title III-A Strengthening Institutions program; Strengthening Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs); Tribal Colleges; and other programs serving traditionally underrepresented populations.

- Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) provide education and workforce training opportunities to under-resourced and underserved communities in urban and rural portions of the country.

BOLSTER JOB TRAINING AND CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Enhance funding for Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, Adult Basic and Literacy Education State Grants, state grants under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), and the National Science Foundation's Advanced Technological Education (ATE) program.

- As industries continue to evolve, Congress should provide dedicated community college funding to efforts that expand job training programs for in-demand industries.

SUPPORT DREAMERS

The Community College Association of Texas Trustees joins the Association of Community College Trustees in requesting Congress to provide a path to citizenship for undocumented young people, including the thousands of students currently enrolled in the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program.



**Community College
Association of Texas Trustees**