



2022 Federal Policy Priorities- 117th Congress (Second Session)



Expand College Access and Affordability:

In the wake of the pandemic, the college affordability gap has only grown. Additional student financial aid is critically needed to help address racial and economic inequities and performance gaps in college completion rates, and increase overall educational attainment. In addition, programs like dual-enrollment, that help increase college access and degree attainment, should be expanded. LACCD strongly supports:

- *Increasing the Pell Grant Maximum Award:*
And, provide annual inflationary increases to the maximum award using mandatory and discretionary funding.
- *Ending the Taxation of Pell Grants:*
Currently, Pell Grant awards can be taxed for amounts that exceed a student's tuition and related expenses. This means community college students must pay tax on any portion of their Pell Grants used to meet living expenses. Taxing Pell Grants also prevents thousands of community colleges from receiving the full American Opportunity Tax Credit (AOTC), because of unintended consequences due to interactions between the programs. It is counterproductive to tax benefits provided to those with extremely limited resources.
- *Making Community College Universally Accessible:*
Establish a federal-state partnership to enhance college affordability and enrollment by creating tuition-free community college. States should also be incentivized to enhance their support of higher education.

Support Dream Act & Comprehensive Immigration Reform:

As one of the nation's leading educators of students enrolled in the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), LACCD supports legislation to provide Dreamers with permanent legal status. This includes H.R. 6, the American Dream and Promise Act, which would provide a pathway to citizenship for undocumented young people. Dreamers should also be able to access federal Title IV student aid funding.

LACCD further urges the enactment of the U.S. Citizenship Act of 2021. Among the many important benefits of comprehensive immigration reform, the LACCD supports a pathway to citizenship for the estimated 10.5-12 million undocumented immigrants in the country; protections for Dream Act and DACA students, with access to federal financial aid; and support for asylum seekers and other vulnerable populations.

Address Student Basic Needs:

The true cost of attending community college extends beyond tuition. A recent study of more than 33,000 community college students found that one-third had the lowest levels of food security and over 50 percent were housing insecure. Fourteen percent of those students surveyed were homeless. These statistics mirror the challenges facing LACCD students, many of whom experience unmet financial needs to pay for necessities such as food, housing, transportation, child care, and medical expenses, including mental health. Many are unemployed. LACCD supports policies that allow students to access vital basic needs services and increase the capacity of community colleges to connect students with the necessary services that will help them persist and succeed in their post-secondary pursuits.

Existing federal programs including the Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) must be aligned and strengthened to meet students' true needs. As well, additional funding should be included in the FY23 budget for the Department of Education's Basic Needs for Postsecondary Students program, which provides grants to eligible institutions of higher education (IHEs) to support these programs.

Invest in Workforce Development:

With passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and ongoing pandemic-related challenges, significant funding for workforce development is essential for a strong economy and global competitiveness. The House-passed Build Back Better Act included \$40 billion for workforce development. In any future human capital investment package and FY 23 appropriations, LACCD strongly supports:

- Increasing funding for the Department of Labor’s Strengthening Community College Training Grants.
- 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.
- New competitive grant programs to expand employment and training activities for high-skill, high-wage or in-demand industry sectors or occupations.
- Expanding the National Science Foundation’s STEM grants focused on HSIs, MSIs and HBCUs degree completion and workforce development.

US Innovation and Competition Act (USICA)/COMPETES Act:

LACCD recognizes Congress has an opportunity to make transformational new investments in research, innovation and American manufacturing. In any final legislation, LACCD urges Congress to include:

- Increased funding for HSIs to provide equitable access to STEM pathways, expose students to high-quality STEM coursework, reduce college costs, and increase postsecondary transfers.
- The National Apprenticeship Act of 2022, which will create nearly 1 million additional opportunities over the next five years.
- Reauthorization of the international education programs under Title VI of the Higher Education Act of 1965, which would expand existing foreign language and area studies programs and build international education capacity at minority-serving institutions.
- Robust investment to build on the demonstrated success of the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) grant program, tightly linking training programs to jobs.

Climate Change:

LACCD is establishing a first-of-its-kind California Center for Climate Change Education (the Center) at its West Los Angeles College campus. LACCD will be the only community college in the nation to offer an Associate of Arts degree in Climate Change and Environmental Studies. The Center will provide fact-based climate change educational resources to assist faculty in the elementary, secondary, and post-secondary systems, and prepare students for future green energy fields, including through internships, externships, apprenticeships, and other work-based learning opportunities. LACCD strongly supports funding to help launch this critical Center in Los Angeles.

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