

LACCD Federal Policy Considerations
115th Congress – First Session
DRAFT- November 2017

Overview

With one party in the control of both Congress and the Administration, federal policies and regulations will be reshaped and new program directions established in the coming year. LACCD is committed to continuing collaborative bipartisan relationships with Congress and the new Administration, with the goal of providing students being served on our campuses with the best quality and affordable education, delivered in a safe and supportive environment. As the new Administration and Congress begin to determine their education and workforce policies, this document will be adjusted accordingly to take these changes into account, identifying both challenges and opportunities.

Potential Priorities

BUDGET/APPROPRIATIONS: A number of key policy issues will be impacted by the FY17/18 Budget and Appropriations bills. Potential priorities include:

- **Fund Year-Round Pell Grants in FY 17 and FY 18 Appropriations:** Provide Pell Grant funding that is sufficient to support scheduled increases to the maximum award without diminishing the temporary surplus in program funds; support reinstating the year-round Pell Grant program; increase the total eligibility period from 12 to 14 semesters.
- **Support for Key Higher Education Programs:** Increase funding support to allow for adequate investments in programs benefitting community colleges and their students, including the Strengthening Institutions Program, Hispanic Serving Institutions, TRIO, GEAR UP, and other student support programs that enable community colleges to serve diverse and disadvantaged populations.

HIGHER EDUCATION ACT REAUTHORIZATION: The current legislation, which was last reauthorized in 2008, expired in 2013. Potential focus areas include:

- **Reinstate the Year-Round Pell Grant Permanently:** In 2008, Congress created a “year-round” Pell Grant to increase persistence and graduation rates and to enable students to complete their degrees more quickly. However, it was eliminated at that time for budgetary reasons, cutting off student and institutional plans to take full advantage of this expanded assistance. Its reinstatement has broad bipartisan support in Congress, including the House Education and the Workforce Committee and the Senate HELP Committee.
- **Reform Graduation Rate Metrics:** The Department of Education currently does not include transfers-out in their official measures of completion rates. This should be corrected so that transfers-out are included in all completion rates. Program lengths should

also be revised to accurately capture the length of time it takes for students to complete their community college degree requirements.

- **FAFSA Simplification:** Support efforts to simplify the FAFSA process to support greater participation, including continued acceptance of prior-prior year earnings.
- **Other Regulatory Priorities:** Eliminate burdensome Department of Education reporting requirements; and oppose the imposition of risk-sharing or new financial penalties or sanctions tied to loan repayment rates or defaults. Despite being low-cost, open access institutions with a relatively small percentage of borrowers, community colleges may be subject to enormous financial penalties under risk sharing.

PERKINS CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) REAUTHORIZATION:

Support the reauthorization of CTE, whose authorization expired in 2013. Last summer, the House passed a CTE reauthorization bill with bipartisan support. The Senate has yet to act. It is expected that CTE reauthorization could move early in 2017. LACCD priorities include:

- **Increase Authorization Levels:** While LACCD commends the House's proposed authorization of over \$1 billion through 2022, further consideration should be given to increasing this amount given the growing enrollment in CTE programs nationwide and the new Administration's interest in supporting vocational and technical education.
- **Support of Dual Enrollment:** Designate dual enrollment as an allowable activity for state leadership funds.
- **Effective Alignment between Employers and Education:** Strengthen CTE alignment with the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) in meeting local and regional workforce needs.
- **Innovative Training Program:** Support the inclusion of a directed program in support of community colleges and other institutions of higher education to address the need to build institutional capacity in career and technical education, targeting specific and urgently needed local workforce skills gap and employment challenges in high demand workforce preparation areas; and addressing employer and local economic development needs.
- **Limiting State Administrative Costs:** With limited funding available to provide direct support to students and CTE programs, it is necessary to ensure that investments go directly to educational providers that are focused on having maximum impact in meeting the economic and workforce challenges of their area.

SUPPORT EFFORTS TO REDUCE TUITION BURDEN/STUDENT DEBT: Work with the new Administration and House and Senate committee leadership to reduce student debt and increase completion rates through efforts to substantially reduce the ever increasing tuition burden and associated costs, such as childcare, transportation and related costs; and to limit the significant issue of student loan repayment.

Additionally, continue to support national and local efforts that advance College Promise as a key approach to addressing the cost of financing a postsecondary education.

SUPPORT FOR VETERANS: Support federal programs that expand the ability of active duty personnel to access community college education and provide them with the support and counseling assistance necessary to succeed and transition into the workplace.

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT: Support Department of Labor-- as well as Transportation and Commerce—programs that can provide funding for community colleges to develop and sustain apprenticeship and other workforce training initiatives, such as in logistics and other high-demand occupations, with strong linkages to, and input from, industry and employers.

INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING: Support bipartisan initiatives to increase funding for infrastructure, that also includes provisions to help finance community college infrastructure improvements.

INNOVATIVE FUNDING: Identify specific federal funding opportunities for LACCD and its colleges to implement cutting-edge, innovative programs that prepare students to successfully participate in the high demand industries and competitive marketplace. This may include pursuing congressionally-directed programmatic funding.

SUPPORT EFFORTS TO IMPROVE STUDENT SAFETY, PHYSICAL/MENTAL HEALTH:

- Support bipartisan efforts to provide permanent legal status for undocumented students and their family; and oppose federal limitations on states that choose to provide education opportunity for such students including offering in-state tuition.
- Support bipartisan measures that ensure access to affordable health care coverage for students.
- Support mental health reform and increased funding for mental health care, including student counseling.

Federal Presence

The following are some of the key elements to ensure that LACCD continues to be recognized as an important voice and resource in higher education on a bipartisan basis; and establishes strong working ties with the new Administration:

- **Continue to Position LACCD as a Recognized Leader in Education:** The District needs to continue to tell its story—how it uses innovative programs, efficient resources, industry-workforce partnerships, and cutting-edge technology to prepare students to compete in the global workforce; show how community college completion creates meaningful jobs for its students and has helped drive the economy in the region.

- **Demonstrate How Size and Academic Reach Has Translated to Student Success:** LACCD's size is an asset to the degree that we can talk about success on a very large scale. Need to showcase how our programs impact hundreds of thousands of students and contribute to their success.
- **Data Driven, Evidence-Based Programs:** The feds are hungry for data—and want to know that our programs are evidence-based and data driven. Our story needs to be backed up with numbers—both at the District level and at the colleges.
- **Build Bipartisan Relationships:** Continue to expand LACCD's bipartisan relationships with the delegation, with education authorizing and appropriation committee leadership. Utilizing our firm's relationships to President-elect's education transition team, help position LACCD in the new Administration.

Scheduling Federal Visits (will be refined after 2017 congressional schedule is released:

- LACCD Leadership Visit: March/April for first 2017 DC visit
- LACCD Congressional Delegation briefing/roundtable in the District