



April 8, 2024

The Honorable Virginia Foxx
Chairwoman
Committee on Education and the Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives
2176 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-6100

The Honorable Bobby Scott
Ranking Member
Committee on Education and the Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives
2102 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-6100

Dear Chairwoman Foxx and Ranking Member Scott:

We write on behalf of the nation's community colleges and their more than 10 million students to state our support for A Stronger Workforce for America Act (ASWAA), which we hope will be considered by the full House soon. This bill will help our current and future students better participate in our economy, enabling them to generate family-sustaining wages. We thank the committee for the many hours of work that produced this bipartisan measure.

ASWAA builds on 25 years of experience with the federal workforce system that was overhauled in 1998. AACCC and ACCT remain focused on ensuring that the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) facilitates full participation of community colleges in the workforce system, a goal that unfortunately has not yet been attained.

This bill helps make the WIOA reporting requirements more realistic, a longstanding community college goal. It streamlines the process for adding programs to the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), including making qualified Workforce Pell programs automatically eligible for the ETPL. Other ETPL revisions will help ensure program quality and clarify that the data to comply with these requirements come from state-level sources.

We endorse the bill's increased emphasis on training, which is a longstanding priority of community colleges, reflected in a requirement that local areas spend at least 50% of funds on skills development. Dedicating H-1B revenues that provides for the creation of mandatory-funded \$5,000 Individual Training Accounts is also a major improvement. These two provisions, along with other



aspects of the legislation, should greatly increase WIOA's support of workforce education. There is one area where we wish the bill would go further and that is in ensuring that the increased focus on training education went hand in hand with an increased emphasis of supports that participants will need, and which is key to successful completion of workforce programs.

Community colleges particularly applaud the authorization of the Strengthening Community College Workforce Development Grant program, modeled on a highly successful program now in its fourth year of competition. This program helps community colleges enhance workforce education offerings in areas of great demand, working in close cooperation with the private sector. We urge the consideration of higher authorization levels for this program and the rest of the Act as a forceful signal of support for continued growth over time.

We thank you again for your leadership on this bipartisan legislation that is of such great importance and has a positive impact on our students and the nation's economic health. We look forward to working with you as the legislation moves towards enactment in the 118th Congress.

Sincerely,

Walter G. Bumphus, Ph.D.

President and CEO

American Association of Community Colleges

Jee Hang Lee

President and CEO

Association of Community College Trustees