



MR. THOMAS TIGHE – Chairman
DR. LAWRENCE A. NESPOLI – President

**New Jersey's Community Colleges
Legislative Priorities
December 2017 to January 2018**

New Jersey's community colleges have three very important legislative priorities we hope to accomplish before the new legislative session convenes on January 8, 2018.

1. **Health Benefits** – The first priority is to move community college employees to the State Health Benefits Plan from the School Employees Health Benefits Plan. This will save community colleges and their employees over \$21 million. Employees will save an average of \$700 per year, with savings much greater than that depending on plan coverage. This move will preserve superior health insurance coverage for community college employees by providing the same coverage offered by Rutgers University, all of New Jersey's state colleges and universities, and the state. In addition, moving to the State Health Benefits Plan will save jobs. Twelve of New Jersey's 19 community colleges have recently had layoffs. More layoffs are very likely to follow if community colleges can't get this relief on health insurance costs.
2. **Capitol Bond** – The second priority is the Capitol Bond for facilities to support technical training programs. Earlier this year, Senate President Stephen Sweeney created a Senate Manufacturing Caucus, chaired by Senator Bob Gordon. The Caucus has proposed including a bond referendum on the November 2018 ballot, which would dedicate funding to New Jersey's community colleges and New Jersey's vocational technical schools to build and equip facilities for technical training programs. Our goal is for the legislature to introduce and pass a bill to include the referendum question on the November 2018 ballot, and for Governor Christie to sign the bill into law.
3. **Workforce Consortium Funding** – The third priority is legislation to establish a \$3 million base for state funding to the New Jersey Community College Consortium for Workforce and Economic Development. The Workforce Consortium is one of the Council's greatest successes, having trained nearly 200,000 employees at over 8,000 businesses throughout the state since its inception in 2003. Much of the customized training the community colleges have provided through the Workforce Consortium has been either state or federal grant-funded. This dedicated base funding will provide the Workforce Consortium and the community colleges with the resources needed to continue serving New Jersey's employers.