



HELEN ALBRIGHT – Chair  
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## **New Jersey Community College Federal Legislative Priorities**

As the largest provider of higher education in New Jersey, community colleges enroll over 325,000 students, providing them a pathway to earn postsecondary credentials and contribute to New Jersey's economy. Federal funding is critical to our colleges, our students, and the nation's continued economic growth and prosperity. New Jersey's 19 community colleges are united in their strong support of the following federal community college priorities.

**Support Pell Grants** - Pell Grants are the single largest source of federal funding for New Jersey's community colleges. Annually, over 66,000 New Jersey community college students receive more than \$225 million in Pell funding. We recommend that Congress support the following:

- Provide Pell Grant eligibility for students enrolled in short-term, workforce-oriented programs;
- Allow Pell Grants to be used for up to 14 full-time equivalent semesters; and
- Increase the maximum Pell Grant award to ensure that low-income students can attend college.

**Oppose Risk Sharing** – The risk sharing proposal in the Higher Education Reauthorization Act would impose assessments on New Jersey's community colleges based on borrowing, student aid, or educational outcomes. Community colleges do not have the resources to absorb large federal financial penalties. Implementation of risk sharing would inevitably result in either increased costs or reduced educational services for students.

**Oppose the PROSPER Act's Elimination of Key Programs** - Campus-based and institutional aid programs including the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG) and the Strengthening Institutions program (Title III-A) provide important resources for community colleges serving high numbers of low-income and first-generation students. The PROSPER Act would eliminate these programs. The PROSPER Act also includes a minimum graduation rate for Minority Serving Institutions to qualify for grants under Titles III and V. These changes will increase costs for millions of college students and their families.

**Support Adult Basic Education, Perkins CTE, and WIOA** - Congress should increase funding for Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, Adult Basic and Literacy Education state grants, and state grants under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to support needs in these areas. Reauthorization should emphasize the importance of strong connections between Perkins recipients and local, regional, and statewide businesses and industries.

**Support the Dream Act** - Community colleges encourage Congress and the Administration to quickly enact the Dream Act or similar legislation that provides Dreamers with permanent legal status and an eventual path to citizenship. The soon to expire Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program provides educational and career opportunities for undocumented young people who were brought to the U.S. as minors and who frequently have no ties to the countries from which they came. The DACA phase-out leaves thousands of young people, including many students, in a precarious status. In addition to changing their immigration status, the DACA rescission will curtail the ability of these individuals to work lawfully and, in some instances, to receive in-state tuition.

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