



May 22, 2026

Senator John Boozman, Chair
Senator Amy Klobuchar, Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Boozman and Ranking Member Klobuchar,

On behalf of the nation's 1,024 community colleges, the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) write to share our views as the Committee deliberates the 2026 Farm Bill.

Community colleges are at the forefront of preparing and upskilling the agriculture and natural resources workforce to meet the opportunities presented by new technology and the challenges of current economic conditions. Our colleges strengthen workforce training related to agribusiness, aquaculture, horticulture, precision agriculture, livestock, dairy, forest and natural resources management, viticulture and enology, and other areas. Furthermore, community colleges' focus on cultivation of entrepreneurship assistance, as well as their economic development orientation, have been enormously helpful to the agricultural sector, especially in rural areas.

The 2026 Farm Bill presents a critical opportunity to scale this impact and better align community college agriculture programs with national agricultural workforce development goals. While universities have been tightly connected to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) research activities for decades, federal support for and partnerships with community college agriculture programs have lagged behind. Even programs designated for non-Land Grant institutions have reached very few community colleges campuses. With new federal assistance, colleges will be able to develop, support, and grow these programs, providing high-quality opportunities for more students, strengthening local industry, and bolstering the nation's agricultural output.

AACC and ACCT are grateful that the House-passed Food, Farm and National Security Act (H.R. 7567) includes a new grant program to authorize grants for community college agriculture and natural resources programs. The bill's Section 7123 is based on the bipartisan Community College Agriculture Advancement Act, led by Sens. Hickenlooper (D-CO) and Fischer (R-NE), and Reps. Kelly (R-MS) and Carbajal (D-CA). AACC and ACCT have long endorsed this legislation.

The program envisioned in the House-passed Farm Bill authorizes competitive grants to community colleges (alone or in consortium), with priority for coordination with the local agriculture industry. The language allows funds to be used for agriculture industry job training, education, research, and outreach, including farm business management. While the House-passed version authorizes "such sums" as may be necessary, the standalone bill authorizes \$20 million



per year. We urge you to continue this momentum and include new support for community college agriculture and natural resources programs in the Senate Farm Bill.

Thank you for your consideration of these important issues for community colleges and the future of the agriculture workforce. If you have any questions on these or other issues, please contact Kathryn Gimborys (kgimborys@aacc.nche.edu) and Jonathan Elkin (jelkin@acct.org).

Sincerely,

DeRionne P. Pollard
AACC President and CEO

Jee Hang Lee
ACCT President and CEO

CC: Members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry