

Top Talking Points for Community College Advocacy Visits

Fiscal Year 2027 Appropriations

Congress's top responsibility under the Constitution is the "power of the purse," funding critical programs to support America's interests. Most of community college top national priorities are funded by Congress's Labor-Health and Human Services-Education appropriations bill (Labor-HHS-ED). This year, the House Appropriations Committee passed its FY27 funding bill for Labor-HHS-ED on a party-line vote; still, floor time is uncertain. The Senate Appropriations Committee continues its negotiations on its bill. Congress is likely to pass a short-term continuing resolution (CR) to continue all programs at current levels beyond the September 30 end of the fiscal year. Advocating with members of Congress now is critical.

Below are talking points for top community college funding priorities this year. View [ACCT's new data resource showing these programs by college, district, and state](#).

1. Pell Grants: Congress must meet its promise to students and "pay the bill" – without cutting eligibility or other education programs.

- Pell Grants are Congress's bipartisan bedrock investment for low-income students.
- [Using [this resource](#), articulate to your Member of Congress the number of students and the dollar amount of Pell Grant funding your Member of Congress represents.] At COLLEGE, X students use Pell Grants, \$Y per year. District/statewide: X students, \$Y.
- Pell Grants help students access, persist, complete, graduate, get good local jobs, pay more in taxes, and rely less on social services later. Pell Grants return the taxpayer's investment in under ten years ([National Bureau of Economic Research](#)).
- While community colleges' tuition and fees have remained flat, the costs of housing, food, and transportation have risen. Congress has not increased Pell to meet inflation.
- Congress's bipartisan FAFSA Simplification Act of 2020 is finally working. Students can now do FAFSA in 15 minutes, so more students are applying and eligible for Pell Grants.
- As a result, the Pell Grant program is now facing a shortfall of \$15 billion.
- The House Labor-HHS-ED spending bill would provide a welcome \$50 increase to the maximum Pell Grant, from \$7,395 to \$7,445. However, the bill pays for this by eliminating subsidized loans and slashing Work-Study and Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants for the lowest-income Pell Grant students.
- Although few community college students borrow, those who do would have to pay thousands of dollars more over the years of the loan – far more than the \$50 increase.
- Pell Grants are bipartisan! This year, community college advocates helped break the [House](#) and [Senate](#) records for bipartisan members of Congress supporting Pell Grants!
- **If you signed the House or Senate letter this year, thank you!**

➔ **ASK: Will the Member of Congress ask the Appropriations Committee to fully fund the Pell Grant program, without cuts to eligibility or other ed programs?**

2. Adult Basic Education (ABE): Protect ABE from elimination!

- ABE helps adults earn their GED and gain basic skills for job training and a better life.
- [Discuss with your Member of Congress these state [data](#) and profiles.] Statewide, X students benefit from Adult Basic Education. Here are details for our state....
- Three out of four employers are having trouble filling job openings.
- A third of U.S. adults have low literacy, and can't enter the military or job training.
- ABE is significantly underfunded, and there are often long waitlists.
- The president's budget and House spending bill would zero out ABE. This hurts jobs.
- ABE is bipartisan! Thanks to community college advocacy, Senators Jack Reed (D-RI) and Todd Young (R-IN) and Rep. Dan Goldman (D-NY) led dozens of senators and House members to support ABE funding this year.
- **If you signed the [House](#) or [Senate](#) letter, thank you!**

➔ ASK: Will the Member of Congress ask the Appropriations Committee to fully fund Adult Basic Ed (ABE)?

3. Strengthening Community College Training Grants (SCCTG) – Thank you!

- SCCTG provides competitive grants from the U.S. Department of Labor to partnerships between community college and employers for in-demand fields.
- Our college won SCCTG (or applied but didn't win due to limited funding). [Use this [data](#) with grants by state and industry.] Our state won X grants totaling \$Y for Z industry.
- The President's budget requested eliminating and consolidating SCCTG.
- SCCTG is bipartisan! Thanks to community college advocacy, Senators Marshall (R-KS) and Warnock (D-GA) and Reps. Goodlander (D-NH) and Bilirakis (R-FL) led a record-breaking number of bipartisan SCCTG supporters this year.
- **If you signed the [House](#) or [Senate](#) letter for SCCTG, thank you!**
- As a result, the House bill provides a \$10 million increase, to \$75 million. Thank you!

➔ Thank you! Please ask the Senate to protect this SCCTG increase.

4. Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) – Thank you!

- If parents don't have child care, they can't go to school.
- CCAMPIS provides competitive grants from ED for child care on or off campus.
- [Our college won/lost \\$X in CCAMPIS to serve Y students](#). (Or we applied/ weren't awarded due to limited funding). Our state won \$A to serve B students.
- **CCAMPIS participants had [triple the graduation rate](#) of comparable students.**
- The Trump Administration again proposed zeroing out this funding. In 2025, the administration abruptly ended more than 100 grants without a chance to compete.
- CCAMPIS is bipartisan! The House had record bipartisan supporters this year.
- **If you signed the [House](#) or [Senate](#) letter this year, thank you!**
- As a result, the House bill protects CCAMPIS with flat funding. Thank you!

➔ Thank you! Please ask the Appropriations Committee to protect CCAMPIS.