



Alamo Colleges District

Dallas College

Kentucky Community and  
Technical College System

Lone Star College

Louisiana Community and  
Technical College System

Metropolitan Community  
College

Virginia Community  
College System

Wisconsin Technical  
College System

May 22, 2023

The Honorable Virginia Foxx  
U.S. House Committee on Education  
And the Workforce  
2211 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Elise Stefanik  
2211 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Foxx and Representative Stefanik:

I am writing to express RAMC's appreciation for the introduction of and your leadership on the Promoting Employment and Lifelong Learning (PELL) Act. RAMC strongly supports all Americans, especially low-income and unemployed workers, having access to affordable postsecondary credential opportunities that can have a significant positive impact on their future career and earnings potential. This legislation will open the doors of opportunity for many Americans who are seeking a postsecondary education for employment in a high-wage career field. We look forward to working with you to further improve this bill to ensure short-term Pell legislation advances this Congress.

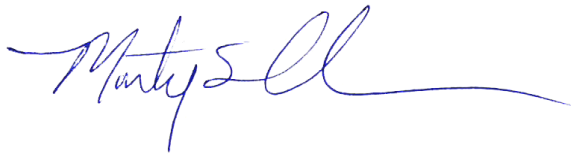
RAMC represents more than 120 community colleges and 1.5 million students nationwide. As you know, community colleges serve 45 percent of all first-time freshmen and 40 percent of our students are first-generation college students. Additionally, a significant proportion of our nation's minority undergraduates attend community colleges, including 44.6 percent of all African American undergraduates, 49.7 percent of all Hispanic undergraduates, and 48 percent of Native American undergraduates. Community colleges are open access, seek to make higher education accessible and affordable for everyone and match employers' need for a larger, more diverse workforce. We know the importance of preparing more Americans to enter the workforce with the skills necessary to compete for in-demand jobs, especially during times of economic recession or labor market contraction.

The PELL Act would extend Pell Grants to programs of at least 150 clock hours and provide instruction over at least 8 weeks, providing students with the opportunity to participate in high-quality, short-term programs that provide them with the necessary skills to pursue high-earning career pathways. Presently, Pell grants cannot be awarded for programs of less than 600 clock hours in length. This leaves many high-quality and in-demand programs as ineligible for Federal grant aid. For many individuals, a short-term credential is the first step towards earning a long-term certificate, an associate degree, or a bachelor's degree. Federal support in such

programs has the potential to yield substantial benefits to students and communities and ensures workers are not left behind. If students do not receive additional support from Congress for short-term courses, they will be cut off from quality opportunities, reducing access to postsecondary opportunities for our nation's most vulnerable students.

Thank you again for considering our views and for your leadership on this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Monty Sullivan", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Monty Sullivan  
Board President, Rebuilding America's Middle Class (RAMC)  
President, Louisiana Community and Technical College System