

March 10, 2021

The Honorable Maria Cantwell, Chair
The Honorable Roger Wicker, Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson, Chair
The Honorable Frank Lucas, Ranking Member
Committee on Science, Space and Technology
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Please support passage of the Advanced Technological Manufacturing Act

Chairwoman Cantwell, Ranking Member Wicker, Chairwoman Johnson and Ranking Member Lucas:

As Congress continues to work on a bipartisan basis to respond to the effects of the COVID 19 pandemic on the nation's economy and workforce, we respectfully urge you co-sponsor and support enactment of the Advanced Technological Manufacturing Act, to reauthorize and provide increased funding for the National Science Foundation's (NSF's) Advanced Technological Education (ATE) program, which is of great importance to student success at community and technical colleges.

With an emphasis on two-year colleges, the ATE program focuses on education of technicians for high-technology fields that drive the nation's economy. The program involves partnerships between academic institutions (middle schools, high schools, and institutions of higher education) and industry to promote improvement in the education of science and engineering technicians. The ATE program supports curriculum development; professional development of college faculty and secondary school teachers; career pathways; and other activities.

The ATE program has not been reauthorized in 29 years. In addition to the need to update the statute in light of changes in education and career opportunities in connection with science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education, the ATE funding authorization should be increased.

We support ATE reauthorization and a budget increase from \$75 million to \$150 million annually as a component of a COVID 19 response stimulus package. This would be accomplished by passing the Advanced Technological Manufacturing Act. The additional funding will promote a post-pandemic economic recovery by bringing research and development, workforce education and industry into new partnerships that foster equitable economic development and a workforce prepared to contribute to the growth of advanced technological sectors.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Dr. Glenn DuBois, Chancellor
Virginia Community College System, VA

Mark Mitsui, President
Portland Community College, OR

Mark E. Ojakian, President
Connecticut State Colleges
and Universities, CT

Dr. Devinder Malhotra, Chancellor
Minnesota State Colleges and
Universities, MN

Dr. Bernard J. Sadusky, Executive Director
Maryland Association of Community
Colleges, MD

Dr. James R. Johnsen, President
University of Alaska Anchorage
University of Alaska Southeast

Dr. Andrea Mayfield, Executive Director
Mississippi Community College Board, MS

David Daigler, President
Maine Community College System, ME

Brian Millner, President & CEO
Missouri Community College Association, MO

Dr. Meghan Hughes, President
Community College of Rhode Island, RI

Dr. Kristina M. Johnson, Chancellor
The State University of New York, NY

Patricia Moulton, President
Vermont Technical College, VT

Mark T. Brainard, President
Delaware Technical Community College, DE

Andrea Henderson, Executive Director
Arkansas Community Colleges (ACC), AR

Dr. Mary S. Graham, President
Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, MS

Clifton "Clif" M. Smart III, President
Missouri State University, MO

Dr. Dennis Lanaster, Chancellor
Missouri State University
West Plains Campus, MO

Dr. Chuck Terrell, President
Eastern West Virginia Community
and Technical College, WV

Dr. Kristine Strickland, Chancellor
Fletcher Technical Community College, LA

Dr. Steve Robinson, President
Lansing Community College, MI

Dr. Vicki Karolewics, President
Wallace State Community College, AL

Dr. Kyle Wagner, President
Northeastern Technical College, SC

Dr. Evelyn Jorgenson, President
NorthWest Arkansas Community College, AR

Dr. Ric Bateman Chancellor
Bossier Parrish Community College LA

Dr. Tina M. Tinney, Chancellor
Nunez Community College LA

Dr. James Sawyer, President
Macomb Community College, MI

Dr. Para Jones, President
Stark State Community College, OH

Dr. Brad Bennett, President
Seward County Community College, KS

Dr. Michael Cioce, President
Rowan College at Burlington County, NJ

Dr. Jack E. Daniels, III, President
Madison College, WI

Dr. John Rainone, President
Dabney S. Lancaster Community College, VA

Dr. Jo Alice Blondin, President
Clark State Community College, OH

Dr. Joe Wyse, Superintendent/President
Shasta College, CA

Dr. Amit Singh, President
Edmonds Community College, WA

Dr. John "Ski" Sygielski, President
Harrisburg Area Community College, PA

Dr. John Cox, President
Cape Cod Community College, MA

Dr. Bentley Wallace, President
South Arkansas Community College, AR

Gregory Haile, President
Broward College, FL

Dr. Tim Cook, President
Clackamas Community College, OR

Dr. Lisa Skari, President
Mt. Hood Community College, OR

Dr. John Richman, President
North Dakota State College of Science, ND

Dr. Jeff L. Pittman, Chancellor
St. Louis Community College, MO

Dr. Aaron R. Fichtner, President
New Jersey Council of County Colleges, NJ

Dr. Joianne L. Smith, President
Oakton Community College, IL

Dr. Cathryn Addy, President
Great Bay Community College, NH

Dr. Mike Muñoz, Interim
Superintendent-President
Long Beach City College, CA

Dr. Jim Murdaugh, President
Tallahassee Community College, FL

Dr. Vincent G. June, Chancellor
South Louisiana Community College LA

Dr. Will Austin, President
Warren County Community College, NJ

Dr. Laurie Chesley, President
Central Oregon Community College, OR

Dr. Dana M. Young, President
Treasure Valley Community College, OR

Mike Cartney, President
Lake Area Technical Institute, SD

Dr. Birgitte Ryslinge, President
Oregon Coast Community College, OR

Dr. Elizabeth Burmaster, President
Frederick Community College, MD

Dr. David Harrison, President
Columbus State Community College, OH

Dr. Margaret Hamilton, President
Lane Community College, OR

Dr. Ross Tomlin, President
Tillamook Bay Community College, OR

Dr. John D. Enamait, President
Stanly Community College, NC

Dr. H. Jeffrey Rafn, President
Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, WI

Dr. Toni Pendergrass, President
San Juan College, NM

Dr. Rob Steinmetz - President, Capital-East Region
Connecticut Community Colleges, CT

- Capital Community College
- Manchester Community College
- Middlesex Community College
- Three Rivers Community College
- Quinebaug Valley Community College

Dr. James Lombella, President, North-
West Region

Connecticut Community Colleges, CT

- Asnuntuck Community College
- Naugatuck Valley Community College
- Northwestern Community College
- Tunxis Community College

Dr. Thomas Coley - President, Shoreline-West Region
Connecticut Community Colleges, CT

- Gateway Community College
- Housatonic Community College
- Norwalk Community College

Earl Meador, Chancellor
Northwest Louisiana Technical
Community College, LA

Dr. Stuart Van Horn, Chancellor
West Hills Community College District, CA

Dr. Lori Weyers, President
Northcentral Technical College, WI

Dr. John Capps, President
Central Virginia Community College, VA

Dr. Cathy Kemper-Pelle, President
Rogue Community College, OR

Dr. Edward "Ted" E. Raspiller, President
John Tyler Community College, VA

Dr. Laura Douglas, President
Bristol Community College, MA

Dr. James D. Genandt, President/CEO
Manhattan Area Technical College, KS

Dr. Kimberly Beatty, Chancellor
Metropolitan Community College, MO

Dr. Frank Friedman, President
Piedmont Virginia Community College, VA

Dr. Cynthia Pemberton, President
Lewis-Clark State College, ID

Dr. Luis Pedraja, President
Quinsigamond Community College, MA

Dr. Clifford Coppersmith, President
Chesapeake College, MD

Dr. Barbara Kavalier, President
St. Charles Community College, MO

Don MacMaster, President
Alpena Community College, MI

David A. Sanders, President
City Colleges of Chicago-Malcolm X College, IL

Dr. James Shaeffer, President
Eastern Shore Community College, VA

Dr. Jerry Corcoran, President
Illinois Valley Community College, IL

Mark Wilson, President
Mitchell Technical Institute, SD

Dr. Charles Lloyd, President
White Mountains Community College, NH

Dr. Lori Suddick, President
College of Lake County, IL

Dr. David Potash, President
City Colleges of Chicago-Wilbur Wright College, IL

Dr. Douglas Jensen, President
Bismarck State College, ND

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Dr. Judy L Mitchell, President
Joliet Junior College, IL

Dr. Glenn Coltharp, President
Crowder College, MO

cc: Members of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
Members of the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology

Contact:

Thomas C. Downs—DGA, LLC
1629 K Street, NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20006
t 202.403.2302 | m 703.283.5914
tcdowns@downsgovaffairs.com

