



**PREPARING FOR THE**  
**COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
**NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE SUMMIT**

# COMMUNITY COLLEGE

## NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE SUMMIT

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# COMMUNITY COLLEGE NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE SUMMIT

Dear Colleague,

Our associations thank you in advance for your participation in the upcoming Community College National Legislative Summit (NLS) at the Marriott Marquis in Washington, D.C. The 2023 NLS, which will take place February 5-9, is a major component of community college leaders' ongoing advocacy efforts. 2023 marks the start of the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress, bringing a new Republican Majority in the House of Representatives and over 80 new elected officials across both parties and both chambers. Your involvement in the 2023 NLS is crucial to helping Congress and the Administration understand the great benefits that community colleges offer to millions of students each year.

The NLS will feature sessions with Members of Congress, nationally known political analysts, and policy experts. These sessions are designed to provide up-to-date insights about current political and policy developments affecting our sector. While you are in Washington, D.C., we hope that you will meet with your Congressional representatives and make your voice heard—ultimately, that is what the NLS is all about.

To assist you in preparing for your trip to Washington, D.C., we are happy to provide you with the enclosed documents. We hope that you will review this information and coordinate with your college and colleagues to prepare materials and talking points. After you meet with your federal legislators, we encourage you to share how the meeting went with ACCT by filling out our [Congressional Contact Form](#).

Please note that we will be convening a special Advocacy Leadership Academy on Sunday, February 5, from 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. The academy is designed to enhance trustees', presidents' and other community college leaders' advocacy skills and knowledge of federal higher education policy. For more information, or to register for the Advocacy Leadership Academy, please e-mail ACCT Director of Government Relations, José Miranda at [jmiranda@acct.org](mailto:jmiranda@acct.org).

We look forward to hosting you in the nation's capital. Please do not hesitate to contact the ACCT or AACC legislative staff if you need any assistance.

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## Taking Steps to Prepare for NLS

The following items should be completed in preparation for NLS. We suggest coordinating with your college and state delegation to complete these tasks and have included a recommended timeline.

Timeline	Action
December and January	<p><b>Learn all you can about your college</b> – Institution's mission, key programs offered, facts about the student population, the business community served by the college, and the economic impact of college programs (one-page summary*).</p> <p><b>Ask your community</b> – What are the needs of the community, how is your community changing, and how is the college responding to these changes?</p>
Early January	<p><b>Schedule Hill meetings</b> – Contact your Senators and Representative(s) in December or January to request a meeting during NLS. (When applicable, please contact your state association because in many situations the state association will schedule meetings for the state's delegation.) Note: We anticipate that most offices will be amendable to in-person meetings by the start of next year. However, offices may have to escort you into the building or may ask to meet with your group in an alternative setting (i.e., outdoors or virtually), depending on their respective policies related to COVID-19.</p>
Mid-January	<p><b>Prepare for the Meeting</b> - Your college team should also consider what your "asks" of your elected official will be. These can include introducing legislation on a key priority, support of or opposition to a specific bill, advocacy for federally funded programs that support your school and students, a campus speaking engagement or visit/tour, or funding through Congressionally Directed Spending</p>

	(Senate) or Community Project Funding (House), formerly known as earmarks.
Late-January	<b>Complete federal funds worksheet</b> – Sharing the impact of these programs on your colleges demonstrates to members and their staff the importance of the federal investment in education and training programs.
Late January	<b>Know your legislators</b> – Do some research into their backgrounds; doing so helps you make a connection and helps you communicate in a way that gets your point across most effectively.
Early February	<b>Group visits</b> – <i>Before</i> the meeting, choose one person to be the spokesperson and start the meeting, decide the key points that should be covered, and who will raise what points.
Mid-February	<b>Follow Up</b> – The follow-up email is an important opportunity to continue building your relationship after visits during the NLS. It allows you not only to say thank you for their time, but also to share materials electronically, put any specific questions in writing, and provide any additional information relevant to the meeting discussion. Also be sure to follow up with ACCT by filling out our <a href="#">Congressional Contact Form</a> with a summary of your meeting and expected outcomes or next steps.

\* A one-page summary about your college is more likely to be saved in a file and referred to than a bulky packet with the college catalog, numerous program brochures, and financial reports. Bring business cards and let congressional staff know that you can answer any questions they have or provide more information about items on the one-pager upon request. This will be much preferred to an overabundance of information.

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## Scheduling Meetings on the Hill

‘What should the invitation to my Member of Congress say?’

- Make sure your request is specific, relevant, timely, and that it appeals to the interests of your members of Congress. It should include why your elected official should want to meet with you. If you know your Senator or Representative has a specific interest (for example, STEM), then consider tying the invitation to their priorities.

‘What details should I include?’

- Congressional offices want to know basic information. We’ve already talked about the ‘why.’ Your invitation should also address the ‘who,’ ‘what,’ ‘when,’ and ‘where.’ The office will want to know what issue areas you want to speak about in order to assign the correct staffer.

‘Where should I send the invitation?’

- In most instances, a request for a meeting on Capitol Hill will go through the D.C. scheduler. Simply call any office and request contact information for the individual who handles scheduling requests in Washington, D.C.
- Congressional offices receive many scheduling requests, so they prefer to receive them in writing. Save yourself a stamp. Email is your best bet when requesting a meeting unless otherwise stated by the congressional office.
- If you have previously met with other staffers in the D.C. or district office, consider including them on the request.
- Make sure you follow up. If you placed a request but haven’t heard back, call or email the scheduler.

‘How much advance notice do they need?’

- Probably not as much time as you may think. Congressional schedules are constantly in flux, but generally begin to shape up two or three weeks in advance. Try to request your meeting at least a month in advance. Early-January is a good time to request meetings for NLS.
- Offer a few different options for meeting times if possible.

‘How long will the meeting last?’

- The standard meeting window is generally a 30-minute block. However, on a particularly busy day you may only be allotted 15 minutes.

- Allow time for overages. Even if you believe you have a 30-minute meeting, it's better to plan to be there for an hour. Meetings can start late or go long.
  - Allowing for extra time is also important to ensure you can get from one building to another. Particularly from one side of the Capitol to another or to a different building requiring another security check.

## Sample Meeting Request

To: [DC Scheduler]  
CC: [Education Legislative Assistant]  
RE: Scheduling Request–Community College Meeting

Dear Mr./Ms. DC Office Scheduler,

I am writing to request a meeting with the [Senator/Representative] on either February 7 or 8. Leaders from our college will be in Washington, D.C., to discuss ongoing activities on our campuses and our legislative priorities for 2023. Our group would like to apprise the Senator/Congressperson of our work on behalf of the community. The Senator/Congressperson may be particularly interested in our efforts around **[insert tie-in to MOC's priorities]** given his/her/their committee work.

Representatives from the college would also like to discuss our legislative and funding priorities for the upcoming fiscal year, including the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act and FY 23/FY 24 appropriations.

The following individuals are slated to attend the meeting:

**Betty Smith, President**  
**Bob Thomas, Board Chair**  
**Jane Jones, Trustee**  
**Diane Roberts, Student**

Our group is available during the following times:

February 7 – **between 10:30am and 3:30pm.**

February 8 – **between 11am and 4pm.**

I can be reached at **(555) 333-2999 or pbsn@commcoll.edu**. Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

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### Appointment Information

Your Representative/Senator: \_\_\_\_\_

Congressional District: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting Date and Time: \_\_\_\_\_

D.C. Office Address/Meeting Platform: \_\_\_\_\_

D.C. Phone Number: (202) \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

D.C. Scheduler Name and E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Legislative Staffer for Education: \_\_\_\_\_

Legislative Staffer for Job Training: \_\_\_\_\_

Legislative Staffer for Appropriations: \_\_\_\_\_

### Notes

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### Know Your Legislator

- Knowing your Representatives' and Senators' backgrounds helps you make a connection and helps you communicate with them in a way that makes your point come across most effectively.
- Do your research. Know their backgrounds and priority issues. Do they have connections to your college?
  - ★ What congressional committees do they serve on? How are those committees relevant to your work?
    - Beyond Education/Workforce Policy, and Appropriations, consider issues under different Committee jurisdictions that impact community colleges' ability to serve students (taxes, immigration, housing/food insecurity, broadband access, etc.)
  - ★ Has your Representative/Senator visited your campus? When? What did they do there?
  - ★ Is your Representative/Senator active in your community college activities?
  - ★ Did your Representative/Senator attend a community college?

### Know Your College & Community

- College leaders should be able to briefly articulate to members of Congress their institution's mission, key programs offered, facts about the student population, the business community served by the college and the economic impact of college programs.
- You represent the same people your Representatives and Senators do. Be able to discuss the needs of the community, how your community is changing, and how the college is responding to these changes.
  - ★ Provide examples of how your institution is serving the community.

## **Know Which Federal Programs are Important to Your College**

- Community college students receive substantial assistance from federal student aid programs, especially the Pell Grant program. Additionally, many colleges benefit from grant programs, such as funding for Strengthening Community College Training Grants, Strengthening Institutions Program, Minority Serving Institutions, TRIO programs, the Carl D. Perkins Act and federal job training programs.
  - Sharing the impact of these programs on your colleges demonstrates to members and their staff the importance of the federal investment in education and training programs.
- ★ Provide examples of the impact of federal support on your institution.

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## Preparing Materials

- ACCT’s federal funds worksheet (located on page 13) is a great resource to share with your member of Congress. Ask your financial aid office to assist in filling it out and provide a copy to your guests during the meeting.
- **Members of Congress and their staffs appreciate brevity;** a brief but substantive summary about your college is more likely to be saved in a file and referred to than a bulky packet with the college catalog, numerous program brochures, and financial reports. Include relevant data when possible.

Below is an example of a handout that Elgin Community College provided to federally elected officials during a prior NLS. Note the emphasis on quantitative information, which makes a particularly strong case without an overabundance of paper.

### COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS COUNT: AN APPEAL FOR INCLUSIVE METRICS

The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) determines completion rates by tracking full-time, first-time, degree- and certificate-seeking students.  
**More than 90 percent of Elgin Community College’s students do not fit this profile.**

IPEDS (Est. 1980s)	TODAY’S ECC STUDENT (FY2013)
<b>FULL-TIME STUDENTS</b> <b>31%</b>	<b>PART-TIME STUDENTS</b> <b>69%</b> <i>With an average age of 27.2 years old, most students work and care for families in addition to their educational pursuits.</i>
<b>FIRST-TIME STUDENTS</b> <b>13%</b>	<b>STUDENT STATUS OTHER THAN FIRST-TIME</b> <b>87%</b> <i>ECC students come from a variety of educational backgrounds. Some begin college-level work in high school (dual credit); some pick up a few credits in summer while attending a four-year university; some drop out of another college or university and come to ECC for a second chance; some begin their work at ECC with GED® or adult education coursework; and some attend ECC after obtaining a college degree elsewhere. None of these students count in the IPEDS formula.</i>
<b>DEGREE-SEEKING STUDENTS</b> <b>31%</b>	<b>STUDENT INTENT OTHER THAN DEGREE-SEEKING</b> <b>69%</b> <i>The Illinois Community College Act of 1965 mandates that ECC offer postsecondary education in four areas: university transfer, career/technical education, adult basic education, and continuing/community education. IPEDS only tracks degree-seeking students, just one of ECC’s four mandates. In addition, the Illinois Community College Board’s (ICCB) required student intent definitions do not identify certificate-seeking students.</i>

ECC STUDENTS MEETING IPEDS DEFINITION

# 9%

ECC STUDENTS OVERLOOKED BY IPEDS

# 91%

FY2013		
STUDENT INTENT	COUNT	COLUMN N%
To prepare for transfer to a 4-year college	5,569	30.8%
To improve skills for present job	535	3.0%
To prepare for future job immediately	7,356	40.7%
To prepare for the GED or improve basic skills	3,560	19.7%
Personal interest/self-development	1,004	5.6%
Unknown/Other	37	.2%

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## NLS Schedule at a Glance

(This is a preliminary schedule. Meeting times and sessions are subject to change. Please Check [nls.acct.org](http://nls.acct.org) for any schedule updates.)

### Saturday, February 4

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9:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.	ACCT Finance and Audit Committee Meeting
9:30 a.m. – 11:30 p.m.	ACCT Member Communications & Education Committee Meeting
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	ACCT Governance & Bylaws Committee Meeting
1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	ACCT Public Policy & Advocacy Committee Meeting
2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	ACCT Trustee Advisory Committee Meeting (by invitation)
3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.	ACCT Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Committee Meeting

### Sunday, February 5

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8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	ACCT Board of Directors Meeting
9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Registration
10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	New Trustee Academy**
11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Advocacy Leadership Academy**
1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	AACC/ACCT Executive Committees Meeting (by invitation)
3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.	ACCT State, Province and Territories Coordinators Network Meeting
3:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	ACCT Regional Nominating Committees Meeting (by invitation)

### Monday, February 6

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7:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Registration
8:00 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.	Opening General Sessions
10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Community College Priorities Session
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Roundtable Seminar for Community College Lawyers
12:15 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.	General Session Luncheon*
2:15 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.	Student Session

**Monday, February 6 (continued)**

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2:15 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.	Policy Focus Sessions
2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	ACCT Advisory Committee of Presidents Meeting (by invitation)
3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Asian, Pacific Islanders and Native American Trustees Meeting
3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Student Trustee Advisory Committee Meeting
3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	African American Trustees Meeting
3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Association of Latino Community College Trustees Meeting
4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.	Corporate Council Roundtable Meeting (by invitation)
5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.	National Capital Reception

**Tuesday, February 7**

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7:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Registration
7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.	State Breakfast Meetings
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	General Session (tentative)
Morning	Visits to House, Senate, and Executive Branch Offices
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Taste of D.C. (lunch on your own)
Afternoon	Visits to House, Senate, and Executive Branch Offices
3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Community College Congressional Forum on Capitol Hill (tentative)
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Capital Awards and Entertainment Banquet *

**Wednesday, February 8**

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8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	General Session Breakfast *
Morning and Afternoon	Visits to House, Senate, and Executive Branch Offices

All meetings take place at the Marriott Marquis Hotel unless otherwise noted

\*Tickets Required

\*\*Advanced Registration Required

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### Impact of Federal Education Dollars on Your Campus

When completed, this form will demonstrate how federal student aid funds and other federal funds are currently at work on your campus. Members of Congress, state legislators, local government officials, and members of the press find this information valuable as they analyze the impact of the many policy changes currently being considered by Congress. Contact your college’s student financial aid or business office to assist you in completing this form.

Even if you are unable to complete all the categories listed on this form, Members of Congress and their staffs will find any information you are able to provide them useful when considering the impact of program funding on their districts.

Name of college: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Federal Pell Grant Summary

Award Year	Number of Recipients	Average grant per student	Total grant dollars disbursed
2021-2022		\$	\$
2020-2021		\$	\$
2019-2020		\$	\$

#### Other Federal Programs (2021-2022)

1. Number of Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG) recipients	
2. Federal SEOG funds awarded (\$)	
3. Number of students participating in Federal Work-Study program	
4. Federal Work-Study program funds awarded (\$)	
5. Number of Federal Direct loan recipients	
6. Average loan amount per recipient	
7. Total Federal Direct loan funds disbursed (subsidized and unsubsidized) (\$)	
8. TRIO funds (if applicable) (\$)	
9. Perkins Career & Technical Education Act funds received (\$)	
10. Title III-A (Strengthening Institutions) Grants funds (if applicable) (\$)	

11. Minority Serving Institutions and HBCU Grants funds (if applicable) (\$)	
12. Strengthening Community College Training Grants (if applicable) (\$)	

**Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF I, II, & III) & Governors Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEERF)**

1. Number of HEERF (I, II, & III) student emergency grant recipients	
2. Average amount of HEERF (I, II, & III) student emergency grants	
3. Total HEERF (I, II, & III) student emergency grant funds	
4. HEERF (I, II, & III) institutional portion of funds	
5. Total HEERF (I, II, & III) Title III & V (Title III-A, MSIs, & HBCUs) funds (if applicable)	
6. HEERF (I, II, & III) Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) funds (if applicable)	
7. Total GEERF funds (if applicable)	
8. Total funding received from CARES, CRRSAA, & ARP	

**Community Project Funding/Congressionally Directed Spending (if applicable)**

<b>Award Year</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>Project Funding Amount</b>
FY 2022		
FY 2022		

**Federal Dollars Assisting Students and the Institution**

Sum of total Pell Grant dollars disbursed in 2021 – 2022 plus lines 2, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 plus total pandemic relief funding (HEERF + GEERF) plus funding from CPF/CDS	
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## Key Terms and Definitions for the Federal Funds Worksheet

**Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act:** Perkins Act programs are intended to enhance educational opportunities for all career and technical education students at public secondary and postsecondary schools. Funds are disseminated to states, which in turn allocate funds by formula to secondary and postsecondary schools. Funds that are directed to public secondary and two-year postsecondary schools are used for program improvement, including equipment, curriculum development, and professional development.

**Direct Loan (DL) Program:** The DL program helps make low-interest, variable rate loans available to students and their families to pay for the costs of attending postsecondary institutions. Direct loans are those provided directly through the federal government. The federal government pays the loan interest for students with demonstrated need while they are in school and during grace and deferment periods.

**Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOG):** The FSEOG program provides an additional source of grant aid for exceptionally needy students. Supplemental Grant recipients use these funds in combination with other types of grants, loans, and work-study aid to meet their total educational expenses. Any academically qualified student may apply for aid to complete a certificate or degree program. Priority for FSEOG awards are Pell Grant recipients. The federal share of the award under the program cannot exceed 75 percent; the remaining 25 percent of the award must be contributed by the participating institution. The grants range from a minimum of \$100 to a maximum annual award of \$4,000.

**Pell Grant:** The Pell Grant program is a needs-based program and grants are awarded to eligible undergraduate students who have not yet earned a bachelor's degree. For many students, Pell Grants provide a foundation of financial aid to which other aid may be added. To determine eligibility for a Pell Grant, the U.S. Department of Education uses a formula established by Congress. This formula evaluates financial information a student supplies, the cost of attendance at their institution, full- or part-time status, and whether the student attends for a full academic year or less. The maximum award for the current award year (2022-23) is \$6,895. Approximately 3 million community college students receive Pell Grants annually.

**Strengthening Institutions and Minority Serving Institutions (MSI) Grants:** MSIs are colleges and universities serving a large percentage of minority students, including: Hispanic-Serving Institutions; Asian American and Native Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions; Native American-Serving Institutions; Predominately Black Institutions; American Indian Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities; Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions; and Alaska Native-Serving Institutions. Most of the funds for these programs are formula based for institutions certified by the Department of Education. Title III, Part A – Strengthening Institution grants are competitive grants for institutions with relatively limited resources and serving a high percentage of needy students.



**TRIO:** TRIO is a compilation of five programs that provide direct outreach and student support services to high school, college and university students. The programs are designed to encourage individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds to enroll in and complete college. By law, at least two-thirds of the students served by TRIO programs must be the first in their family to attend college.

**Work-Study:** The Federal Work-Study program leverages resources from schools and the private sector to provide opportunities for students to earn money to pay for college. The program is also designed to encourage students receiving federal financial aid to participate in community service. In addition to providing self-help assistance to students, Federal Work-Study funds help support partnerships between the federal government, postsecondary schools, students, and communities.

**Strengthening Community College Training Grants (SCCTG):** The Strengthening Community Colleges Training Grants Program (referred to as Strengthening Community Colleges or SCC) aims to build the capacity of community colleges to collaborate with employers and the public workforce development system to meet local and regional labor market demand for a skilled workforce. The grants also build the capacity of community colleges to address challenges associated with the COVID-19 health crisis, such as expanding online and technology-enabled learning and migrating services to a virtual environment.

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## Community College Priorities – Preview

NLS attendees will receive the ‘green sheet’ – a summary of federal legislative priorities for community colleges – just prior to the start of the NLS. Attendees are encouraged to use the green sheet as a handout during meetings on Capitol Hill.

The months of December, January, and February are particularly active on Capitol Hill. Many pending issues may be resolved before the NLS, and additional issues and proposals may emerge. To ensure that our priorities are timely and relevant ACCT and AACC finalize the green sheet in the days leading up to the NLS.

In order to assist attendees in preparing for NLS, ACCT and AACC have provided an overview of several topics that are likely to be included as priorities during February’s NLS. We recommend utilizing the general priorities below to develop your advocacy plan for the NLS.

- Invest in Key Federal Education & Workforce Programs
- Expand Pell Grant Eligibility to Short-term Workforce Programs
- Invest in and Increase Access to Basic Needs Supports for Students
- Reform the Tax Code to Better Help Students That Need It Most
- Enact a Permanent Solution for DACA Students
- Bolster Job Training and Career and Technical Education
- Provide Resources to Rural Colleges to Better Support Agricultural Workforce Development

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### Successful Meeting (Virtual or In Person) Tips

*Considering the ongoing national emergency related to the Covid-19 pandemic and security and staffing concerns stemming from January 6, 2021, meetings with federal policymakers and their staff members that are scheduled in conjunction with ACCT's 2023 National Legislative Summit may be held in person or virtually, depending on each office's policy. The new Republican House Majority is expected to lift restrictions on entry to House Office Buildings, while the Senate restrictions on escorted entry may remain in place. As you prepare for your meetings, below are some helpful tips to keep in mind:*

- ★ **Take a detail-oriented approach to scheduling meetings:** We expect most meetings to take place in person, though there may be different policies in place with regards to entry into House and Senate Office Buildings. Policies may also vary according to individual offices, be sure to ask what the process is for entering the premises, will staff escort your party in, or will you meet them directly in their office? Will you need to contact anyone in the office prior to arrival? If so, be sure you have their contact information and that you share with the office a primary contact for your group. In the unlikely event of a virtual meeting, be sure to clarify which meeting platform will be used & communicate meeting information with all attendees.
- ★ **Have a plan for the structure of the meeting:** Coordinate with others before the meeting to determine who will start the meeting, lead introductions, close out the meeting, etc. You may also want to establish the topics each attendee will speak about and in what order to help keep the meeting on track and ensure every attendee to plays a role. Designating a note taker will aid in your meeting follow-up.
- ★ **Be on time, flexible, friendly, and brief:** Arrive, Log-in or call-in early and be willing to wait. **Meeting with staff can be as productive as seeing the Member personally.** *Flexibility* is important because Members' schedules get re-prioritized at a moment's notice. Stick to the issues and the facts, and don't belabor the meeting. Congressional staff are friendly and open to meeting with visitors from the state or district they represent.
- ★ **Have college specific information on hand to share:** Institution specific information, including student demographics, enrollment trends, and examples of existing partnerships with outside stakeholders will help inform policy decisions made by Members of Congress and their staff. To further familiarize your representative or senator with your college, you can offer to facilitate a virtual tour of your campus (if feasible).

- ★ **Ask about your Member's priorities:** As with any good relationship, it is important to have give and take. Ask your Member what his or her priorities are—doing so presents an excellent opportunity to find out more about his or her interests and agenda. This discussion may also yield other opportunities to work together on additional issues.
- ★ **Ask for support:** Your representative, your senator, or their staff should be able to give you an indication of the member's level of support for community college priorities. It is appropriate for you to ask their position.
- ★ **ACCT and AACC:** Remind Members and their staff that ACCT and AACC are two national associations that represent community college trustees and CEOs, respectively, and are headquartered in Washington, D.C. They are available and always willing to provide information on community college issues.
- ★ **Photo Op:** Be sure to ask for a photo opportunity with the Member of Congress or their staff before you leave the meeting. You can use the photo to thank the Member and their staff on social media or to accompany a news release for your local newspaper. This will help communicate that you are working on behalf of your community and yield positive publicity for your college.
- ★ **Exchange Follow Up Information and Share Leave Behind Materials:** Towards the end of the meeting, ask the staffer for their email address and let them know to expect a follow up email shortly after the meeting concludes. The email should include contact information for all meeting attendees as well as any leave behinds you would like to share (especially a one-sheet overview of your college). Remember to start the email with a thank you!

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### NLS PRE-DEPARTURE CHECK LIST

- Appointment information – date, time, location or platform, and names, e-mail addresses, and numbers of staff with whom you have spoken.
- Know your community – be able to explain briefly and clearly the needs of the community, how your community is changing, and how the college is responding to these changes.
- One-page profile/summary of your community college.
- Legislator background information.
- Completed federal funds worksheet that shows the impact federal dollars have at your college and for your students.
- Record of issues on which you have previously contacted the legislator.

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### Keep the Momentum Going After the Meeting is Over

#### Send Thank-You Notes or Emails

- ★ A thank-you note is not only polite, but also provides an opportunity to follow up on key topics discussed during the meeting. Send a note to both the member of Congress and to participating staff. It can be a useful reminder for your congressional offices to follow up on further conversations, research, or commitments made during your meeting.

#### Promoting the Visit

- ★ Utilize social media or a press release to publicize information and photos from the visit. When quoting members of Congress, work with their press offices to first gain approval.

#### Coordinating with ACCT

- ★ The conversations you have with your legislators can shed light on what is on the minds of Members of Congress. Informing ACCT about the topics discussed, questions asked, or commitments the lawmakers may have done can help our government relations team do follow ups with them to strengthen their overall support for community colleges. We encourage you to fill out the [Congressional Contact Form](#) after your visit to help us in our advocacy.

#### Maintaining Contact

- ★ Often the communication ends when the meeting is over. Keep the relationships going by engaging with staff regarding campus activities. This could include forwarding a campus newsletter or newspaper article to a relevant staff member.
- ★ Consider offering space on campus for events. Members of Congress often hold public forums or events, but cannot pay for an expensive venue. A town hall meeting at your campus would be a great opportunity for your college, your members of Congress, and your mutually beneficial relationship.
- ★ Make sure they know you are an informational resource. You now have a staff contact in that office. Make good use of it!