

September 30, 2009



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The Honorable Timothy Ryan  
1429 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515-3517

Dear Representative Ryan:

I write as President of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACCC). AACCC represents the nation's almost 1,200 community colleges and has 29 formally affiliated councils, including the American Student Association for Community Colleges (ASACC).

Earlier this year, President Obama challenged community colleges to produce five million more graduates by 2020. This challenge echoed similar calls from the last several years. In response to these calls, across the country community colleges are focused on developing new strategies to ensure that all those students who wish to graduate are enabled to do so. A broad array of variables impact persistence and graduation, but many of them fall outside the lens of policymakers and researchers, who tend to focus on financing and academic preparation. However, the very nature of the community college, whose students so frequently have work and family responsibilities that transcend the preoccupations of traditional students, demands a broader approach.

Therefore, AACCC is pleased to lend its strong support for the community college provisions in H.R. 3312, the "Preventing Unintended Pregnancies, Reducing the Need for Abortion and Supporting Parents Act." AACCC is particularly focused on Section 602 of the legislation, which authorizes demonstration grants to community colleges to support activities to prevent unplanned pregnancies. Without question, unplanned pregnancies have a tremendous negative impact on the ability of community college students to finish their studies. 61% of community college students who have children after enrolling don't finish their education, which is 65% higher than the rate for those who didn't have children. In America's higher education system, students who have unplanned pregnancies are concentrated in community colleges.

Under H.R. 3312, community colleges will be eligible for demonstration grants to develop and implement innovative approaches to prevent unplanned pregnancy and promote healthy relationships among community college students. We particularly applaud the legislation's flexibility, which should encourage needed experimentation with pregnancy prevention programs. At the same time, colleges will be expected to develop strategies that involve large numbers of students and are sustainable. The legislation is authorized at \$15 million for each of fiscal years 2010-12.

We appreciate your leadership in introducing this important legislation and are pledged to working with you to secure its enactment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George R. Boggs".

George R. Boggs  
CEO and President