

July 14, 2011

12-014

URGING MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TO TAKE
ACTION TO ENSURE THAT THE PELL GRANT
PROGRAM RECEIVES THE NECESSARY FUNDING
TO CONTINUE TO HELP MILLIONS OF AMERICANS
ENROLL IN AND COMPLETE COLLEGE

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REPORT: WHEREAS, Community colleges educate and train nearly half of all undergraduates in America, and more than 40 percent of those undergraduates are the first in their families to attend college; and

WHEREAS, Portland Community College serves more than 50,000 credit students and almost 90,000 credit/noncredit students each year and has served over 1.3 million students since its founding in 1961; and

WHEREAS, Postsecondary education is rapidly becoming a minimum requirement for employers seeking to hire trained personnel, and by 2018, the United States workforce will need 22 million new workers with college degrees, according to a June 2010 report by the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce; and

WHEREAS, The Pell Grant program is by far the largest source of financial aid for community college students, many of whom would be unable to afford college without it; and

WHEREAS, There were 14,126 Pell Grant recipients at Portland Community College in academic year 2009-2010, with each recipient receiving on average a \$3,088 Pell Grant; and

WHEREAS, A total of \$43,625,560 million in Pell Grants were awarded to Portland Community College students in 2009-2010; and

WHEREAS, Community college leaders have resolved to increase college completion rates in a nationwide call to action, and the Pell Grant remains an essential resource for students to stay in school and complete their degrees;

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board urges Members of Congress to take action to ensure that the Pell Grant program for college students remains vital, including maintaining a \$5,550 maximum award, so that the program may continue to help millions of Americans receive the critical financial aid they need to enroll in and complete college.