



2018 ANTELOPE VALLEY BOARD OF TRADE

WORKFORCE EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Post-Secondary Education

The Antelope Valley Board of Trade implores the California Congressional Delegation to provide their assistance in ensuring the world's largest higher education system and the pipeline of community colleges that support it, is returned to full funding and staffing levels in existence prior to the State of California's prolonged budgetary woes.

In addition, your support of the of the Antelope Valley Higher Education initiative and a future public, four-year university located in the "Aerospace Valley" is required.

Additionally, we request that the California Delegation turn its attention to the re-authorization of the Higher Education Act, including reducing barriers to access to higher education.

Pre-Engineering Program

Our Greater Antelope Valley faces mounting skills gap between the preparedness of workers and the capabilities that manufacturers need and the scarcity of graduates in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields.

Your assistance is requested with locating additional funding sources to support infrastructure for and further expansion of the Antelope Valley East Kern STEM Network "Program. At full implementation, the program is expected to be the national model for stemming the shortfall of engineers that currently exists in the United States.

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

There is a huge disparity in the Antelope Valley between the technical jobs available and the skill level of the residents. There are jobs available, however they often require a higher skill and education level than many of the residents possess.

Funding under the Carl D.Perkins Career-Technical Education Act of 2006 (PL109-270) allows us to address this gap in training and education programs. The program supports the development of academic and career and technical skills among secondary education students and postsecondary education students who elect to enroll in career and technical education (CTE) programs. The largest program authorized under Perkins IV is the Basic State Grants program. This program provides formula grants to states to develop, implement, and improve CTE programs, services, and activities. However, funding which was reduced under the sequestration, while increased to some extent, still has not yet been restored to full levels. In fact, recent additional reductions in allocations to California are causing it to approach “hold-harmless” levels not seen in recent memory. The resulting cuts to education and employment programs come as state budgets are facing continuing budget shortfalls. It is unlikely that states will be able to replace the funding, which means effective education and employment strategies will end. This will exacerbate, not improve the slowly-recovering local economy. We urge the California Delegation to restore Perkins funding to full pre-sequestration levels, and to move forward with all due speed in re-authorizing this critical CTE legislation.

Of equal concern is the critical shortage of new qualified career-technical educators across in California and across the nation. Without a continuing supply of these teachers, both through renewed teacher preparation programs and alternative certification measures of mid-career professionals, existing CTE programs may be forced to close.

We therefore request the Delegation to support legislation [such as S.2174 (Kaine-VA)] to streamline processes to fill these positions, leading to continued course offerings to fill the skills gaps.

Finally, we respectfully request that the California Delegation show their support for career-technical education as a whole by joining the House or Senate CTE Caucus, as applicable.

