

2008 LEGISLATIVE GOALS

Adopted 2/11/08

ICCTA WILL WORK TO PASS BILLS THAT:

1. Protect local control of community colleges

A recent 18th Judicial Circuit Court decision reaffirmed the concept that community colleges are units of local government with locally elected or appointed governing boards. ICCTA will continue to protect local control of community colleges and oppose any legislation that infringes on this authority.

2. Provide full and equitable FY09 funding for community college operations

ICCTA works to secure the best state funding support that is possible. Since FY03, the community college system has experienced reductions in state support. In addition, suburban “collar county” colleges are seeking relief from local property tax caps, which have hindered their ability to raise needed operating revenue.

3. Continue capital construction program for higher education

A five-year, \$50 million annual program for capital construction was started in FY02 and is in addition to the Illinois Board of Higher Education’s regular Capital Plan. However, community colleges have capital needs that are approaching \$1 billion statewide.

4. Expand the Illinois Incentive for Access grant to the second year

ICCTA was instrumental in creating the IIA several years ago. This Illinois Student Assistance Commission grant program awards the neediest first-year students with an additional \$500 over and above all other scholarship awards. In FY04, a successful ICCTA-backed initiative doubled the amount to \$1,000 per eligible student. The IIA program should be extended to second-year students as well. Community college students make up about 2/3 of the students receiving the grant and currently receive about \$7 million annually from the program.

5. Restore funding and support additional growth in adult education programs

ICCTA promotes initiatives to improve funding for adult education programs. The immediate goal is to restore state support that was reduced to address state budget issues. Long overdue increased state support for adult education first began when the Illinois Community College Board became responsible for the administration of the programs. Efforts to increase funding should continue.

6. Expand the community college retirees health insurance program

ICCTA worked to create a health insurance program for community college retirees. Now in its eighth year of operation, the College Insurance Program (CIP) is a successful health program for the retirees of a community college. More work needs to be done to tell legislators of future needs to improve access to the CIP for all community college retirees and their dependants.

7. Insure adequate funding levels for current public pension and health insurance plans

8. Recognize bonafide student organizations in the Election Code for purposes of appointing deputy registrars who can conduct student voter registration events. Current law recognizes many civic organizations that qualify their organizations as deputy registrars. Students are not recognized.

9. Meet and educate candidates for the Illinois General Assembly and U.S. Congress

Many candidates in the November 2008 election will be new to the legislative process and unfamiliar with community colleges. A comprehensive effort by trustees and presidents should be undertaken to meet and educate them regarding community college issues and needs.

10. Clarify a sick leave provision in the State Universities Retirement System Article for employees of the community college and university systems.

11. Improve the Property Tax Limitation Law

Amend the current law to allow extensions to increase by the Employment Cost Index (currently the Consumer Price index) or 5%, whichever is least.

12. Support direct appropriation and design/build authority for capital projects

ICCTA supports changing the role of the Illinois Capital Development Board in overseeing community college capital projects.

13. Support 100% funding of Illinois Veterans Grants

The FY08 state budget provided \$7.2 million in funding for Illinois Veterans Grants, or 50 percent of the expected need. ICCTA supports full funding of this program, especially in light of the growing number of student soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.

14. Support impact fee authority for community college districts

ICCTA WILL MONITOR LEGISLATION AND RULE-MAKING REGARDING:

1. Farmland assessment

ICCTA is monitoring farmland assessment practices in order to accurately evaluate any impact upon community college districts.

For additional information, contact ICCTA at 1-800-454-2282 or iccta@communitycolleges.org