

COMMUNITY COLLEGE COALITION FOR FUNDING

ILLINOIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEES ASSOCIATION

ILLINOIS PRESIDENTS COUNCIL

ILLINOIS COUNCIL OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS

COOK COUNTY COLLEGE TEACHERS UNION

COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

For immediate release

March 18, 2009

For more information, contact:

Kim Villanueva, 217-528-2858, ext. 1

Community College Coalition Praises Gov. Quinn's New Direction on Higher Education Funding

SPRINGFIELD -- A statewide coalition of students, college leaders, elected officials, and labor unions today praised Gov. Pat Quinn's proposed increase in funding for Illinois community colleges. "This reverses seven years of declining State revenues for our colleges," said Jeff May, president of the Illinois Community College Trustees Association. "Gov. Quinn's innovative approach will place our community college system on the right road for success. We're looking forward to working with the Governor and the Illinois General Assembly to find solutions to the State's fiscal crisis."

Gov. Quinn's proposed budget would increase state support of community colleges by more than \$9 million for FY 2010. This is an increase of more than 3 percent above last year's budget.

"Illinois is blessed with one of the finest community college systems in our nation," said Dr. Robert Mees, chair of the Illinois Community College Presidents Council. "It would be a tragedy to continue the precipitous slide in State funding." Illinois' investment in its community colleges has fallen from \$347 million in FY 2002 down to \$297 million in FY 2009.

"Illinois needs to fully realize that by investing in our community colleges, we are investing in our own state's economy," said Perry Buckley, president of the Cook County College Teachers Union.

The Coalition for Community College Funding was organized last year to advocate for more support of the state's public community colleges. With 48 colleges located across the state, Illinois community colleges serve nearly one million Illinois students each year.

The Coalition will continue to bring its message to the public and the Illinois General Assembly this spring in support of the Governor's budget recommendation.

#####