



# Maine Community College System

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## RESOLUTION OF THE TRUSTEES OF THE MAINE COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM REGARDING TABOR II

Be it *Resolved* that the Board of Trustees of the Maine Community College System does hereby acknowledge that, if passed by Maine voters in November 2009, the Tax Payer Bill of Rights (TABOR) II as presented will have a potential adverse impact on the students and colleges of the Maine Community College System. In light of its concern, the Board of Trustees of the Maine Community College System issues the following *Statement of Concern* regarding TABOR II and its effects on Maine's Community Colleges and the students they serve.

### **MCCS Board of Trustees STATEMENT OF CONCERN *The Impact of the 2009 Maine Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) on Maine's Community Colleges***

On November 3, 2009, Maine citizens will be asked to vote again on a Maine Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR). Among other provisions, the citizen's initiative seeks to limit increases in state revenue collections and expenditures to a fixed formula that can be altered only by statewide vote.

#### ***The Proposed Question:***

*"Do you want to change Maine law to require voter approval for state and local tax and spending increases over certain limits?"*

#### ***Response:***

If approved, it is our assessment that TABOR will have significant, unintended negative consequences for the State of Maine and the Maine Community College System (MCCS). As the MCCS governing board, we are concerned about TABOR's potential impact on the seven colleges within our system and the 16,550 students we serve. We believe that under TABOR the MCCS state appropriation will remain flat or will be significantly diminished at a time when our colleges face continuing unprecedented enrollment growth.

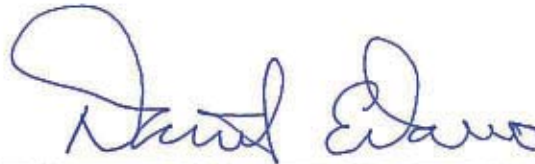
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In the seven years since they were created, Maine's community colleges have experienced an 83.8 percent increase in degree enrollment. With growing unemployment and increased need for access to higher education, Maine's community colleges are experiencing an unprecedented increase in applications. This year alone, degree enrollment is up 12.7 percent.

The result: Maine's community colleges are severely under-funded and stretched thin, unable to meet the growing annual demand by Maine employers for skilled workers or to serve all those in Maine who seek an affordable entry point to higher education and a more prosperous future. By locking in the budget cuts of 2008 and 2009 for years to come, TABOR will make it much more difficult for the community colleges to address Maine's significant need for a more highly skilled workforce, putting the state at a severe disadvantage when competing for new, good paying jobs. TABOR's rigid caps on revenue collections and spending will mean that existing enrollment caps at our colleges will only grow more severe.

It is our reasoned conclusion that TABOR will make necessary, long-term investments in Maine's Community Colleges nearly impossible leaving thousands of Maine people who need access to higher education without that option, and consequently without the opportunity for a brighter future.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_



Honorable Daniel E. Wathen, Chair  
Board of Trustees  
Maine Community College System

September 23, 2009