WHEREAS, Congress is in the process of reauthorizing the Higher Education Act (HEA), originally authorized in 1965 and is supposed to be renewed every five years;

WHEREAS, the last reauthorization was approved in 2008 through a bill known as the Higher Education Opportunity Act;

WHEREAS, HEA is the single most important piece of legislation overseeing the relationship between the federal government, colleges and universities, and students;

WHEREAS, The legislation authorizes various federal aid programs within the Department of Education that support students pursuing a postsecondary education, including grant programs that support efforts to expand and increase access for low-income and first-generation students;

WHEREAS, House Education and Workforce Chair Virginia Foxx (R-NC) introduced the Promoting Real Opportunity, Success, and Prosperity Through Education Reform (PROSPER) Act (H.R. 4508), the committee marked up and approved the bill along party lines on December 13, 2017, and the full House of Representatives is expected to vote on the bill early in 2018;

WHEREAS, the legislation in its current form would make higher education more expensive for millions of students and families while also making significant changes in federal higher education policy without a clear understanding of the likely consequences;

WHEREAS, by eliminating the Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG) program, which serves 1.5 million students annually; eliminating the in-school interest subsidy for six million low-income student borrowers; and reducing the amount families can borrow to pay for college, this legislation would immediately increase the cost of college

WHEREAS, this bill creates and imposes new and complicated mandates on institutions, such as requiring weekly or monthly financial aid disbursements, public disclosures, and programmatic repayment rates (among others) that would substantially increase the time and funding needed to comply and further undermine the ability of institutions to serve students and accomplish their missions;

WHEREAS, community colleges are particularly hard hit by a number of proposals in the PROSPER Act which include eliminating the Title IIIA Strengthening Institutions program and amending the long-standing Title IV return-of-funds process by adding a risk-sharing component that will have an especially negative impact on community colleges;

WHEREAS, The PROSPER Act eliminates or cuts funding to programs such as TRIO that have been proven to support low-income students, prepare students in high demand fields such as
teaching, and support the strengthening of institutions supporting first-generation, low-income students;

WHEREAS, this bill eliminates important programs such as the Title II TEACH Grants and Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF), programs that encourage graduates to go into nationally important, but low paying fields such as teaching and social work;

WHEREAS, the Hartnell CCD Board of Trustees cannot support this legislation as written, but supports the proposals in the legislation that would lower burden and cost, encourage completion, and expand access.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Hartnell Community College District Board of Trustees opposes the PROSPER Act in its current form and requests that Congress work in a bipartisan manner to pass legislation that protects and expands programs that support the most vulnerable students, including first generation and low-income students, in achieving their education and career dreams. Further, that the Hartnell CCD Board of Trustees encourages Congress to maintain the following provisions in future legislation including:

- The adoption of recommendations from the 2015 bipartisan report of the Task Force on Federal Regulation of Higher Education;
- The creation of a new bonus to Pell Grant recipients to incentivize completion;
- Simplification of the process of applying for federal aid;
- Elimination of origination fees on student loans;
- Providing institutions and financial aid officers on campuses the authority to limit borrowing.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Hartnell Community College District Board of Trustees on this 6th day of February, 2018, by the following vote:

AYES: Donohue, Montemayor, Osorio, Padilla-Chavez, Salazar, Serena

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: DePauw

ABSENT: None

[Signature]
Manuel M. Osorio
President of the Board of Trustees

[Signature]
Willard Clark Lewallen, Ph.D.
Secretary of the Board of Trustees