

Durbin, Duckworth Talk Accessibility Of Higher Ed, Job Training Programs With Illinois Higher Education Leaders

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL) and U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) today spoke with the leaders and members of the Illinois Community College Trustees Association (ICCTA) and the Federation of Independent Illinois Colleges and Universities (FIICU), which represents 58 Illinois private, nonprofit colleges across the state. During the meetings, Durbin and Duckworth advocated for doubling the maximum Pell Grant and supporting other federal student

aid programs to help improve the accessibility of higher education. The Senators also discussed job training programs provided at Illinois colleges and universities and how they can serve as a pipeline for professions facing a workforce shortage, including the health care industry.

“One of the greatest gifts we can give the next generation is an education. But for many Illinoisans, financial constraints are a barrier to reaching a college degree or a professional certification,” said Durbin. “Today, Senator Duckworth and I had productive conversations with both FIICU and ICCTA about how we can make education more accessible by strengthening federal programs that help reduce costs for students and fortify job training and employment opportunities.”

“Those of us who weren’t always sure we’d be able to go to college understand the power of a diploma,” Duckworth said. “We cannot stay on the sidelines as higher education keeps slipping further and further out of reach for so many people. That’s one reason I was so glad to have such productive conversations today with Senator Durbin and several leaders from Illinois colleges and universities about the importance of making college education affordable and attainable for all students—especially students of color, student parents, women and Veterans.”

Photos of the meeting with ICCTA are available [here](#).