Dear Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole,

I am requesting $1,010,000 for the Pima County Community College District for the equipment needed for the Flexible Industry Training (FIT) Lab at Pima Community College’s new Center of Excellence in Applied Technology in fiscal year 2022.

The funding for this one-year proposal will be used to fund the equipment needed for the Flexible Industry Training (FIT) Lab at Pima Community College’s new Center of Excellence in Applied Technology, where PCC will partner together with business and industry to train and upskill employees with necessary 21st century skills. In order to continuously meet the future needs of the labor market, PCC is building multiple Centers of Excellence. Each of Pima Community College’s Centers of Excellence will have its own Flexible Industry Training (FIT) Lab, where the necessary innovation, collaboration, partnership, workforce recovery, and reengineering of higher education can occur to create a talent pipeline that builds a workforce that is imperative for a thriving Arizona economy. Additionally, this space will attract larger business and industry partners from other locations into Southern Arizona. The collective impact that will result from the FIT Lab will result in job creation, a high-skilled and educated workforce, and a strong economy. This $1 million will allow PCC to purchase more than 41 pieces of state-of-the-art manufacturing equipment, ranging from 3D scanners and printers, to foundry and casting equipment, to electronic assembly tools, laser cutter, robotic arms and probes, and electronic wiring trainers.

Pima Community College (PCC) is committed to providing world-class instruction, affordable, and accessible educational certificates and programs that lead to in-demand careers with family-sustaining wages. PCC is reimagining higher education in partnership with stakeholders to create accelerated programs that have embedded 21st-century skills needed for gainful employment and upward social mobility. Central to the statewide Reskilling and Recovery Network in Arizona is providing learners with targeted education and skills that will rapidly lead to gainful
employment. This Reskilling and Recovery Network constitutes PCC’s partnership with the National Governors Association (NGA) and the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) Reskilling and Recovery Network. The Arizona State Team is composed of representatives from the Office of the Governor of Arizona, Business and Industry, Arizona’s Community Colleges represented by the Arizona Community College Coordinating Council (AC4), the ARIZONA@WORK system, Achieve60AZ, and local workforce development leaders.

This proposal is a valuable use of taxpayer funds because PCC’s Center of Excellence in Applied Technology will specifically focus on job creation and growth through working collaboratively with business and industry to train students in the in areas of automotive, advanced manufacturing, automated industrial technology, and computer-aided design.

I appreciate your time and consideration of this important project.

Sincerely,

Raúl M. Grijalva

Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress