

2016 Resolution No: 3

Submitted by: Mayor Martin J. Walsh, Boston, Massachusetts

Resolution Supporting Free Community College Tuition

WHEREAS, the current and future strength of the United States economy is and will be dependent on the skills of its workforce; and

WHEREAS, a strong and skilled workforce depends upon our young people receiving a high-quality education; and

WHEREAS, the need for education beyond high school is growing, as nearly two-thirds of all U.S. jobs will require some form of post-secondary education or training by 2020; and

WHEREAS, over the last three decades the cost of college tuition and fees has increased nearly four times faster than median income; and

WHEREAS, incoming community college students tend to be lower-income and tend to have lower academic skills than those entering four-year colleges; and

WHEREAS, community college graduates on average earn \$9,400 per year more than those with just a high school degree; and

WHEREAS, community colleges are well-integrated into local communities, serving a broad diversity of students; and

WHEREAS, community college completion puts low-income students on a path towards four-year college completion, expanding opportunities to make higher wages due to the greater earning power of a college degree credential; and

WHEREAS, the President of the United States proposed through the 2015 State of the Union address a comprehensive plan to make two years of community college “as free and universal in America as high school is today”, creating a state/federal partnership for eliminating tuition and fees for all community college students in the United States; and

WHEREAS, since the President’s State of the Union address, at least 27 new free community college programs launched in states, communities, and community colleges, collectively serving nearly 40,0000 and adding over \$70 million in new public and private investments,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the United States Conference of Mayors calls upon Congress to develop and pass a plan for making community college tuition free for all students nationwide, with priority given to those low income students eligible for Pell Grant assistance.

Projected Cost: Unknown