



June 2, 2021

Snyder County Commissioners
9 West Market St
Middleburg, PA 17842

Dear Commissioners Joe Kantz, Adam Ewig, and Chuck Steininger:

The Susquehanna Human Resource Management Association (SHRMA) is a membership organization of approximately **100 local Human Resources professionals representing YOUR community's employers**. Our organization is a chapter of the national Society of Human Resources Management (SHRM). On a daily basis we see the skill gap that exists between employers needs and worker's training and education. Community colleges are a critical resource to help employers get the talent they need and close this gap. For this reason we support the vision for a community college that will be an anchor institution for economic growth, cultural enrichment, civic participation, and regional pride. We want a local public community college with *affordable* tuition so residents in our region can attend classes close to home and gain access to focused training for critical job openings in our area as well as opportunities for life-long career and personal development.

A new community college that awards accredited diplomas, certificates, and associate degrees means students earn stackable credits that can stand alone or transfer to a four-year university or college, *without* needing to commute long distances *or* go into debt (currently, Pennsylvania college and university students are among the most indebted in the country). The community college will offer career training for new and growing industries specific to our central Pennsylvania region, thereby building a highly qualified workforce in the Susquehanna Valley that will attract and retain new employers and businesses, providing long-term economic benefit.

Some of the key statistics supporting the establishment of an independent, local community college are:

- 78% of survey respondents from the Susquehanna Valley support a new community college
- There are 11,000 current job openings in the Central PA region; only a dedicated regional community college can manage this demand
- 60% of all nurses obtain their degree from a community college
- 85% of part-time community college students are working in their communities and raising their families
- 94% of all community college students remain in PA after graduation/completion
- Tuition for the new community college is about \$5,500 per year for a full-time student, and is met by the Pell Grant (for which most Valley residents qualify)

Community colleges are also a key driver of regional economic growth and tax revenue:

- Local sponsorship generates a minimum 400% return: for every \$1 invested at the county level, \$4 flow into the region
- The regional wealth-building economic impact of a community college annually exceeds \$50 million
- Our own community college keeps this wealth circulating in the local economy, rather than sending it outside the region
- For every \$1 invested by the county sponsors, a community college returns about \$13 in tax revenue
- The establishment of this institution will bring **\$78.5 million of economic growth** to our region over its first 10 years based on the recent economic study by EMSI.

SHRMA respectfully urges you, as Snyder County Commissioners, to sponsor a new independent Susquehanna Valley community college as described in the PA Code Title 24 Article XIX, so we can bring this asset to our region, strengthen our workforce, retain talent and youth, and have a profound, lasting community and economic impact.

Please sign a formal Resolution of Sponsorship and submit an application to the Pennsylvania Department of Education for a new Susquehanna Valley Community College.

On Behalf of the SHRMA Board of Directors and Members
Respectfully yours,



Tina Welch
SHRMA Chapter President

cc:
Meghan Beck
President, Susquehanna Valley Community Education Project