



Workforce Program Growth Initiative

Exceptional Item Request

89th Legislative Session



As the 89th Texas Legislature considers appropriations matters for 2026-2027 biennium, Houston Community College (HCC) submits an exceptional item request intended to help drive economic success, elevate the lives of residents throughout the community, via its proposed **Workforce Program Growth Initiative (WPGI), Building a Talent Strong Texas**. Consider the following:

1. HCC is a level 2 degree granting institution authorized by pertinent accrediting and certifying agencies to offer baccalaureate degrees in Artificial Intelligence and Robotics and Healthcare Management.
2. These high demand and high growth fields, by way of example, are expanding workforce opportunities in a fast growing region where industry demand warrants having sufficient facilities to accommodate a compelling need.
3. The WPGI addresses the need for talent to meet the workforce demands of emerging industries throughout the Houston region.
4. These industries are dependent upon a pipeline of skilled workers in areas like energy, petrochemical, including hydrogen, healthcare, construction, aircraft mechanics, chemical and biomanufacturing, fuel cell, and oil and gas.
5. According to the Greater Houston Partnership's workforce development arm (*i.e.*, Upskill Houston), the best skilled workforce is necessary to succeed in the 21st century.
6. Importantly, related training must be accessible for persons to reskill and upskill for useful employment purposes.
7. HCC would strategically locate these **facilities in four geographics quadrants in a phased multi-year approach** throughout the region intended to effectively meet the workforce demands of industry.
8. The proposed size for each facility is estimated at **40k to 65k square feet** and will effectively cover the HCC Service Delivery Area, which spans over 631 square miles, including both Harris and Fort Bend counties.
9. The facilities will operate to enhance Texas' competitive edge in energy, healthcare, technology, and other emerging areas, **Building a Talent Strong Texas**.
10. HCC immediately requests non-formula funding totaling **\$28M for fiscal years, 2026 and 2027**, respectively to help advance this initiative.