

**CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES
CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE**

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April 3, 2017

The Honorable Jerry Hill
California State Senator
State Capitol, Room 5035
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 769 (Hill) – Community College Baccalaureate Pilot Program
As Amended March 27, 2017

Dear Senator Hill,

On behalf of California Community Colleges Chancellor Eloy Ortiz Oakley, I write regarding Senate Bill 769. This bill would expand the California Community College (CCC) baccalaureate pilot program from 15 to 30 baccalaureate degrees; authorize community college districts (CCD) to offer more than one baccalaureate degree; authorize degrees to overlap with degrees offered by the California State University (CSU) or University of California (UC), if the CCD is more than 100 miles from the CSU or UC program; and, remove the pilot program sunset date.

California law outlines the distinct mission and functions of California's system of higher education. CCC are responsible for basic skills instruction, and academic and vocational education at the lower-division level. The Education Code grants CCC authority to offer associate in arts and associate in science degrees.

Recognizing California's growing skills gap, in 2014 the California Legislature authorized a pilot program for CCCs to grant baccalaureate degrees. SB 850 (Block), Chapter 747, Statutes of 2014, authorized the CCC Board of Governors (BOG), in consultation with CSU and UC, to establish a pilot program for a single baccalaureate degree to be granted by up to 15 community colleges. The Legislative Analysts' Office (LAO) is required to conduct an evaluation of the pilot, to review, among other aspects: cost structure; whether degrees offered align with workforce demands; retention and completion rates; graduate employment outcomes; and, the impact of the program on underserved and underprepared students. The LAO is also required to provide recommendations on whether and how the pilot program can or should be extended or expanded. An interim evaluation is due to the Legislature by July 1, 2018, and the final evaluation is required to be completed by July 1, 2022.

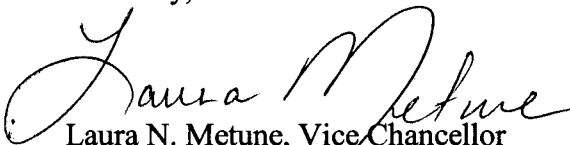
In March of 2015, the CCC BOG gave final approval for 12 colleges to participate in the pilot, offering bachelor's degrees in fields including respiratory therapy, dental hygiene and manufacturing technology. In May of 2015, CCC BOG approval was issued for the final three colleges in the pilot program and included degrees in automotive technology, interaction design, and biotechnology. In the fall of 2016, 10 of the 15 colleges enrolled their first cohort of students, providing approximately 375 students across

the state an opportunity to earn an applied baccalaureate through their community college. The remaining five colleges in the pilot are expected to begin programs in the fall of 2017.

The CCC Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) is focused on supporting the existing pilot colleges in establishing highly successful baccalaureate programs. To that end, the CCCCCO would support a clarification to existing law to provide students who enroll in a baccalaureate program prior to the sunset date the assurance that they will have the opportunity to complete their program of study beyond the date of the sunset. The CCCCCO will work closely with the LAO to ensure a thorough review of the pilot program that provides the Legislature with the information necessary to evaluate program and scope expansion options. Until a review of the pilot program is completed, the CCCCCO is unable to support an expansion of the program.

I appreciate your ongoing commitment to the community college baccalaureate pilot program and I look forward to continuing to work together in the coming Legislative Session. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact my office at (916) 323-5951.

Sincerely,



Laura N. Metune, Vice Chancellor
Governmental Relations and External Affairs