



Academic Senate
for California Community Colleges

LEADERSHIP. EMPOWERMENT. VOICE.



COMMUNITY COLLEGE
LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA



NORTH ORANGE COUNTY
COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT



FOOTHILL-DE ANZA
Community College District



MT. SAC!
Mt. San Antonio College

10 April 2018

The Honorable Kevin McCarty
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee on Education and Finance
California State Capitol, Room 2136
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Assemblymember McCarty:

As a coalition of organizations that represent faculty, campus leadership and community college districts, we write in strong support of key proposals within in the California Student Aid Commission's report *Expanding Opportunity, Reducing Debt*. The proposal sets long overdue reforms to Cal Grants in motion. Further, implementation of the proposal would create a more simplified and equitable financial aid system for Californians pursuing further education and training.

Our low income students are facing a crisis. To attend college, our students face a range of obstacles including California's skyrocketing housing costs, exorbitantly priced textbooks, and other costs associated with living in California. Our students face a stark choice – take a class that will help them achieve their educational goals, or work to afford the high cost of living in California. Far too often they must choose the latter.

To alleviate this, the State provides \$1,672 via the Cal Grant B Access award. Had it kept up with inflation, it would be worth approximately \$6,000 today. Increasing the award would help our students work less, focus on their education, and ultimately be more academically successful.

Additionally, we write in strong support of CSAC's Report proposing to consolidate the State's financial aid structure into a single grant system, decouple the focus on tuition and fund a portion of a student's expected family contribution instead. In doing so, the State's financial aid framework would better address the total cost of attending a higher education institution and treat students in each public higher education sector more equitably.

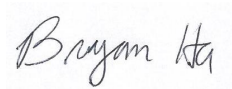
The state's current Cal Grant system does not effectively nor equitably serve community college students. Despite two-thirds of students at a higher education institution being at a community college, and those students being the most diverse in the state, only six percent of Cal Grant funding supports students attending one of our 114 colleges. This underinvestment in our students undermines their ability to take classes and graduate on time.

Chair McCarty, we write to you in strong support of both increasing the Cal Grant B Access Award and implementation of the proposals contained in *Expanding Opportunity, Reducing Debt*. Both would create a more equitable financial aid system and ultimately increase student access, success and equity.

Sincerely,



Julie Bruno
President
Academic Senate for
California's Community Colleges



Bryan Ha
Legislative Representative
California Federation of Teachers



Jonathan Lightman
Executive Director
Faculty Association of
California's Community Colleges

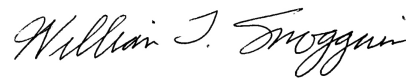


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Kern Community College District
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