



September 5, 2019

The Honorable Anthony Rendon
Speaker of the Assembly
State Capitol, Room 219
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Toni Atkins
President pro Tempore of the Senate
State Capitol, Room 205
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Speaker Rendon and President pro Tempore Atkins:

GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND FOR CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES FACILITIES

We understand that negotiations are ongoing related to an education facilities bond that could be placed on the March 2020 ballot. As organizations deeply committed to the success of students in the California Community Colleges (CCC), we are writing to share information related to the facilities needs of the nation’s largest postsecondary educational system.

As you know, the California Community Colleges serve the top 100 percent of students, including disproportionate shares of first-generation college students, low-income students, and students of color, in a range of programs—from career education in high-needs fields like child development to transfer preparation to adult learning. About half of our students are from the lowest-income families (incomes of less than \$30,000 a year). Consequently, community colleges enroll more low-income Pell Grant recipients than do California State University (CSU), the University of California (UC), and California’s nonprofit colleges combined. Our 115 colleges and 72 centers, located in nearly every community in the state, serve 20 percent of the nation’s community college students and more than 70 percent of California’s public postsecondary undergraduate students. Of students that ultimately graduate from the CSU and UC, 51 percent and 29 percent, respectively, begin postsecondary education at a community college.

Consistent with existing statutes, the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office has prepared a five-year capital outlay plan that highlights the new facilities and infrastructure improvements needed to carry out the system's mission. Currently, the total unmet facilities needs for the community colleges is approximately **\$22 billion** over the next five years. While this is a conservative amount that does not fully account for local site development costs, outyear continued costs, and other factors, we believe this a starting point that begins to account for life-safety concerns, enrollment growth, and modernization needs. These needs are vast and will require new, increased resources directed for facilities to sustain a high-quality educational environment.

We support a new education facilities bond consistent with the following principles:

- The state has an important role to play in supporting adequate community college facilities that necessarily complements, and does not replace, local resources.
- The state shares responsibility for supporting infrastructure for continued enrollment growth and modernization of existing facilities—beyond addressing life and safety issues.
- The share of higher education facilities bond funds allocated to the CCC should be equitable given the segment's share of enrollment and number of campuses operated.

Consistent with these principles, as you negotiate a bill that could place a bond measure on the March 2020 ballot, we request that, if the bond would authorize funds for entities beyond schools and community colleges, it recognize the responsibilities and magnitude of the community colleges by specifying that at least half of the funds available for higher education be allocated to the CCC. Therefore, with the provisions of Assembly Bill 48 in mind, we specifically request that at least \$2.5 billion be allocated for the CCC in the negotiated bill.

We must directly face a troubling reality that per-student resources for the CCC have long been far too low. For each student enrolled, the community colleges receive less funding than the CSU and the UC do, even though the community colleges are likelier to enroll those students who have faced the greatest barriers to educational attainment. We must recognize when actions might perpetuate—or worsen—those conditions. Every policy decision is an opportunity to rectify that reality. We urge you to use this negotiation as one of those opportunities.

Sincerely,



Susan Bray
Executive Director
Association of California Community College
Administrators



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