



September 4, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor of the State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 900
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Request for Veto on AB 2193 (Holden)

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the Association of California Community College Administrators (ACCCA), I am writing to respectfully request that you veto Assembly Bill (AB) 2193 (Holden). This bill would establish civil liability for a public or private institution of higher education by a person harmed by a hazing incident that occurred on or after January 1, 2026, from an organization affiliated with the educational institution with a rebuttable presumption that the institution took reasonable steps to stop the hazing.

ACCCA emphatically opposes hazing and strongly endorses the needed implementation of practices that prevent hazing and protect students from this horrendous act. However, we believe that the inclusion of community colleges in this bill is misplaced as our institutions do not have a Greek system, our students rarely remain on campus outside of attending class, and we do not have a history of hazing incidents.

Despite no real history of hazing in our system, AB 2193 would still open community colleges up to costly litigation by including the ambiguous “should have known” language in the bill. This language creates an unreasonable expectation for colleges to have micro-level involvement within student organizations, which further opens colleges up to costly liability.

We strongly believe that unless it can be proven that an institution was grossly negligent in preventing a hazing incident, it is unfair to open them up to costly liability for events that are beyond their control. The Senate Appropriations Committee bill analysis estimates that the bill would result in one-time Proposition 98 costs in the range of \$2.9 million for community colleges to develop a comprehensive hazing prevention and outreach program and to update existing rules and regulations governing student and employee behavior. Additionally, the analysis states that community colleges would also incur unknown, but potentially significant Proposition 98 costs associated with the liability provisions in this bill. ACCCA strongly believes that Proposition 98 dollars are precious resources that should go to educating students and providing competitive wages and benefits to staff, not for settling lawsuits.

We strongly believe in your consistency over the last couple of years in vetoing bills that would have resulted in significant state and local costs that were not accounted for in the Enacted State Budget. With state revenues softening over the past two State Budget cycles, we believe that you should again exercise a prudent approach in what bills to sign into law and once again veto any measures with significant costs, such as AB 2193.

ACCCA supports Assemblymember Chris Holden's goal to prevent future hazing incidences at educational institutions. However, as currently written, this bill would create a costly mandate for community colleges, which are facing tightened budgets and increased cost pressures all while the state economy is softening. We believe rather than sign this bill, you should veto the measure and encourage the Legislature to reintroduce the measure next year without including community colleges. For the aforementioned reasons, we respectfully request that you veto AB 2193.

Sincerely,



Susan K. Bray
Executive Director

cc: The Honorable Chris Holden
Nichole Muñoz-Murillo, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Governor Newsom
Michelle McKay Underwood, Legislative Advocate, School Services of California Inc.
Kyle Hyland, Legislative Advocate, School Services of California Inc.