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Assembly
California Legislature



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ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, SPORTS,
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BUDGET
TRANSPORTATION
BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE NO. 2 ON
EDUCATION FINANCE

WEBSITE
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March 12, 2018

The Honorable Phil Ting
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 6026
Sacramento, California 95814

The Honorable Kevin McCarty
Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee #2
State Capitol, Room 2136
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Assemblymember Ting and Assemblymember McCarty,

We, the undersigned, request that full funding of the University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) be a top budget priority for the Assembly Budget Committee.

For too long, the public institutions of higher education in California have been underfunded, and regrettably, students have had to bear the burden. We need to fully fund both the UC and the CSU to ensure that California students have access to these esteemed institutions, without also burdening them with more debt. Too many young people in this state struggle to pay for college and are stacked with insurmountable debt before entering the workforce, creating systemic problems that have lasting impacts on our economy. Both the CSU and UC play a critical role in helping meet the state's workforce needs. Full funding is essential to supporting undergraduate enrollment growth and ensure that we meet the state's growing workforce demands. At a time when California has reached a new height of economic prosperity, greater investment in higher education is essential to the growth and prominence of California.

Below is a breakdown of the funds requested and what they will be used for.

The University of California request of \$105 million of on-going funds and \$35 million in one-time funding in addition to the Governor's proposal:

- \$70 million will be used to fund improvements to ensure student success and timely graduation: faculty hiring, academic counseling, student mental health services, graduate student support and classroom facilities.
- \$25 million will be used to address larger class sizes, the student to faculty ratio, and increased demand on student services that are consequences of the enrollment growth from the Budget Acts of 2015 and 2016.



- \$10 million will be used to continue improving access for qualified students: 500 California resident undergraduates, and 500 graduate students.
- \$35 million (one-time funding) will be used for classroom, laboratory and other campus maintenance needs. These monies will address the most urgent projects on campuses—fixing classrooms, updating labs, and critical infrastructure—from the University’s backlog of State-supportable deferred maintenance. UC’s backlog now exceeds \$4 billion and is the third largest among all State agencies.

Nearly one-third of state funding to the CSU was cut during the recession. Since then, the CSU has only been fully funded once (2015-2016) and now serves more than 35,000 additional students. This year, the Governor’s budget proposal provides an increase equal to half the rate of inflation, and representing only a 1.4% increase to their operating budget. The CSU requests an additional \$171 million of on-going funds, above the \$92.1 million proposed by the Governor:

- \$61 million will be used to fully fund faculty and staff compensation per agreements made with bargaining units. After years of stagnant wages due to the state’s fiscal condition, faculty and staff are receiving well-deserved raises, on average, 3 percent per year, consistent with those received by state employees.
- \$20 million will be used for access. For many traditionally underserved communities, the CSU is the primary point of access to a college degree. In 2015-16, the CSU awarded 63 percent of the degrees earned by Latino students and 33 percent of the degrees earned by Black students statewide. More than fifty percent of CSU students are the first in their family to graduate from college. The number of graduating high school seniors eligible for CSU admission grew from 114,400 in 2007 to 175,400 in 2015. As thousands more high school students meet minimum CSU eligibility requirements, the state needs to make sure the system has the funding to necessary to enroll the state’s diverse student body.
- \$75 million will be used for Graduation Initiative 2025. The CSU is making historic progress on increasing its four-year and six-year graduation rates. Additional funding is necessary for this trajectory to continue and to provide campuses with resources to eliminate achievement gaps.
- \$15 million will be used for infrastructure. Fifty-five percent of all CSU buildings are more than 40 years old, requiring significant investment to be maintained. The CSU deferred maintenance backlog currently stands at approximately \$2 billion. This request would enable the system to finance about \$225 million for capital projects systemwide.

We have a responsibility to do more to keep our higher education institutions affordable—not only for the benefit of students, but for California as a whole. The University of California and California State University systems are pinnacle examples of public funds benefiting the good of the public. Thank you for your consideration of this request. I look forward to continuing this conversation about fully funding California’s public institutions of higher education.

Sincerely,



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Assemblymember 61st District

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