

April 9, 2018

The Honorable Holly Mitchell
Chair, Senate Committee on the Budget & Fiscal Review
State Capitol, Room 5080
Sacramento CA 95814

The Honorable Anthony Portantino
Chair, Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Subcommittee #1 on Education
State Capitol, Room 3086
Sacramento CA 95814

RE: Support for Governor Brown's Proposed Online Community College

Dear Chair Mitchell and Senator Portantino,

I am writing in support of Governor Brown's 115th community college, a fully online campus that will deliver skills and industry-valued credentials that millions of working adults need to advance their careers and improve their economic future. The CalAsian Chamber of Commerce fully supports this initiative and urges you to enact this historic proposal.

It is troubling that more than 2.5 million working Californians aged 25 to 34 – of whom 49 percent are Latino, 31 percent white, 9 percent Asian and 7 percent African American – cannot access the educational pathways needed for economic mobility. Many are primary household wage earners, work full-time jobs, care for family, and are unable to attend classes at a brick and mortar campus during a traditional academic year.

The 115th community college fills a critical void in California's higher education system in that it will complement traditional campuses by reaching a currently unserved population. This online college provides a flexible and affordable learning option for workers to earn short-term certificates and credentials needed for higher wages and job promotion.

With the sixth largest economy in the world, it is imperative that California invest in educating and training more adults to meet the increasing demand for a skilled workforce and fuel our growing economy. Our success depends on the workforce of tomorrow, and this proposal puts California on a path toward greater prosperity.

On behalf of the CalAsian Chamber of Commerce, I strongly encourage you to embrace the 115th community college so that more workers in your districts can access the opportunity to improve their economic futures.

Sincerely,



Pat Fong Kushida
President & CEO
California Asian Pacific Chamber of Commerce

Cc: Members Committee on Budget & Fiscal Review
Members Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Subcommittee #1 on Education