



March 16, 2018

The Honorable Holly Mitchell, Chair

Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review
State Capitol, Room 5080
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Anthony Portantino, Chair

Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee #1
State Capitol, Room 3086
Sacramento, CA 95814

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

Dear Senators Mitchell and Portantino,

I am writing in support of Governor Brown's 115th community college—an important option that should be added to California's broad ecosystem of higher education opportunities. We at California Competes believe our state's economy is best served by a higher education system that advances access and equity for all Californians. As the demands of our state's diverse population and workforce have rapidly changed, and income inequality has grown, the state needs to take bold steps to expand access and help close our degree and credential attainment gap. We believe the Online Community College initiative will open new channels toward economic mobility for the 2.5 million high school graduates aged 25 to 34 who have not attempted college or have chosen to leave before completing a degree.

California Competes is currently researching the challenges faced by these stranded workers. Many in this group work full-time, have children, and earn far less than those with postsecondary degrees. A flexible and affordable learning option offering a faster track to higher wages and promotions could allow stranded workers to succeed in a higher education system that currently does not meet their needs. Moreover, an online community college offers the convenience many of our for-profit institutions have been capitalizing on for years, victimizing millions of students in the process.

All Californians should have the opportunity to live the California dream—this significant portion of our state's population should not be restricted from the promise of economic mobility.

California needs widespread innovation in higher education to maintain equitable access and remain economically competitive. Governor Brown's proposal to establish a fully online community college campus provides a chance for individuals who cannot reasonably attend a brick and mortar college to keep up—and move up—in our economy.

Thank you,

Lande Ajose, PhD
Executive Director



CC:

The Honorable Jay Obernolte, Vice Chair

State Capitol, Room 4116
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Rocky Chavez

State Capitol, Room 2170
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Monique Limon

State Capitol, Room 4167
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Jose Medina

State Capitol, Room 2141
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Al Muratsuchi

State Capitol, Room 2179
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Patrick O'Donnell

State Capitol, Room 2196
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Randy Voepel

State Capitol, Room 4009
Sacramento, CA 95814

Christian Osmeña

Vice Chancellor for College Finance and Facilities Planning
California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office
1102 Q Street, 6th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95811
cosmena@cccco.edu

Karen Y. Zamarripa

Karen Zamarripa Consulting
1017 L Street, #522
Sacramento, CA 95814
kzamarripa@gmail.com