



April 6, 2018

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The Honorable Anthony Portantino
Chair, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review
Subcommittee on Education Finance
State Capitol Building, Room 3086
Sacramento, CA 95814

Proposed 2018-19 California Community College Budget California Online College – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Portantino,

On behalf of the Campaign for College Opportunity, I write to express our support of a 115th fully online California Community College, as outlined in the Governor's Proposed 2018-19 State Budget and to **provide a lifeline for the millions of working Californians that need college to improve their skills and make it into the middles class.**

The Campaign for College Opportunity is a broad-based, bipartisan coalition, including business, education, and civil rights leaders that is dedicated to ensuring that all Californians have an equal opportunity to attend and succeed in college in order to build a vibrant workforce, economy, and democracy.

We know that just under half of adults in California have a college degree or credential although growing demand for a more educated workforce requires that 60% of adults have a degree or credential by 2025. Last year, the Campaign for College Opportunity released a statewide report card on higher education in California which shines a spotlight on the state of college attainment in California. **The report card found that in order to produce the 1.7 million additional adults with college credential by 2025, California needs to increase production of undergraduate degree and certificates by 23,000 and only produced 12,584 toward that need in the 2014-15 academic year.** This proposal has the potential to significantly help meet that gap. Despite the vast number of courses offered by community colleges, there are currently 2.5 million Californians in the prime working ages between 25 and 34 who have only a high school diploma or some college but no degree. Unless provided with flexible learning options that meet working students where they are, this population is likely to remain stranded in their current economic situation because they are limited by work schedules, transportation barriers, or child care needs.

The 115th community college will create and coordinate accessible, flexible, and high-quality online courses and programs. A critical part of the college's efforts will be ensuring working students have the support they need to succeed in their programs. The online college will work with community-based organizations to identify and market this online college to the 2.5 million adults that are not currently accessing higher education. Lastly, the college will not impact

traditional community colleges' enrollment because its enrollment base will be working adults that are not currently accessing higher education.

For these reasons, we ask that you support this ambitious proposal that can help meet critical workforce needs and offer a new path forward that will result in educating more Californians, strengthening our economy and ensuring all Californians have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Thank you for your leadership,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessie Ryan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jessie Ryan
Executive Vice President
The Campaign for College Opportunity

cc: Members of the Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee on Education Finance
Anita Lee, Principal Consultant, State Senate Budget Committee