



March 8, 2018

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

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

RE: California's 115th Community College

Dear Assemblymembers Ting and McCarty,

On behalf of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, our members, and the local business community, I write to express our support for California's 115th Community College.

In order to address projected workforce gaps and remain economically competitive, California must become a leader in providing widespread access to affordable higher education. It is imperative that our education and training programs keep pace with the fast-developing technologies, innovations, and the unpredictable economic realities that business and industry adapt to on a daily basis. To this end, we can, and must, pursue flexible and adaptive education, training and workforce development strategies that reflect the scale and nature of emergent industry and labor demand changes. This is the pace at which business and industry are moving.

The community colleges' 115th College provides yet another opportunity to ensure that our non-traditional students are obtaining the credentials that will allow them to access economic and social mobility. The makeup of this stranded population is 49 percent Latino, 31 percent white, 9 percent Asian and 7 percent African American. Many cannot attend traditional college on a traditional academic calendar because they are the family bread winner or they must care for children or ill relatives. They need to attend on their own time for their own needs.

The new online offering will work for this group of workers because of its flexibility and short-term credential programs being developed. Not everyone has the privilege of attending a traditional college; so, let's not leave people behind because they have to also work and earn a living.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,

Gary L. Toebben
President & CEO
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce

CC:

The Honorable Jay Obernolte, Vice Chair
The Honorable Rocky Chavez
The Honorable Monique Limon
The Honorable Al Muratsuchi

The Honorable Jose Medina
The Honorable Patrick O'Donnell
The Honorable Randy Voepel