

May 3

Honorable Nancy Skinner  
1515 Clay Street, Suite 2202  
Oakland, CA 94612

**RE: Support for Governor Brown's Online College Proposal**

Dear Senator Skinner,

My organization fully supports your efforts to establish the 115<sup>th</sup> community college – a fully online campus that will give California's 2.5 million stranded workers the opportunity to advance in today's economy.

We urge the Legislature to enact this historic proposal which would provide millions of Californians the skills they need to land quality, emerging jobs and advance our state's economic future.

We find it troubling that more than 2.5 million working Californians aged 25 to 34 – of whom 49 percent are Latino, 31 percent white, nine percent Asian and seven percent African American – currently 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.

We applaud your vision to change the *status quo* by making higher education more equitable and accessible for these workers who the system currently does not serve. The 115<sup>th</sup> community college will address an urgent, unmet need by providing a flexible and affordable learning option for workers to earn the certificates and credentials needed for higher wages and job promotion.

As the sixth largest economy in the world, it is imperative that we invest in educating and training more students 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 towards greater prosperity.

We encourage the Legislature to remember the stranded workers in their districts throughout the state and make sure they are no longer denied the opportunity to improve their economic futures.

Thank you,  
Marina Mechanical

James Hussey  
Chief Executive Officer