



May 9, 2016

Assembly Committee on Appropriations
California State Capitol
Room 2114
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Support AB 1892

Dear Chairwoman Gonzalez and Members of the Committee

On behalf of the Leadership Council of California Forward, I am writing to support AB 1892, which will restructure the state's CalGrant C financial aid for vocational education so more students from different backgrounds can take advantage of quality career technical education programs at California community colleges.

This proposal was one of 25 proposals to emerge from the 2015 Strong Workforce Task Force, a year-long effort led by the California Community Colleges Board of Governors to identify ways to enhance workforce training systems to meet the needs of the economy and labor market.

After serving on the Task Force, CA Fwd and its partners in the California Economic Summit have committed to supporting increased investment in career technical education (CTE) programs—and implementing all of the Task Force's recommendations.

AB 1892 is an important part of this effort, raising the amount of need-based financial aid for students taking career tech courses at community colleges from \$547 to just over \$3,000—including \$2,462 for tuition and fees and \$547 for access and training-related costs.

This investment is a critical step in California's efforts to expand access to programs that have a proven track record of connecting workers with well-paying jobs. Five years after graduation, CTE graduates earn an average salary of \$66,000, compared to \$38,500 for other community college students.

The bill also includes helpful changes to how these grants are awarded, requiring the Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, rather than the California Student Aid Commission, to first identify and provide to the commission a regional inventory of high-demand jobs available to graduates of CTE programs. This will help the commission prioritize how awards are distributed, ensuring funds go to students with a clear path to well-paying, middle class jobs.

CA Fwd and its Summit partners are working with the Legislature on several other Task Force proposals in 2016 to ensure California's community colleges and other workforce training programs are aligned to achieve this same goal.

To that end, CA Fwd is also supports the following vehicles:

- **Budget Act of 2016 provisions** that provide full funding \$200 million for the Strong Workforce Program, \$48 million for the Career Technical Education Pathways Program, and \$25 million to the Awards for Innovation in Higher Education.
- **SB 66 (Leyva)** to implement Task Force recommendations on measuring student employment outcomes.

The CA Fwd Leadership Council urges your support for AB 1892, and we thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Jim Mayer
President & CEO
California Forward

CC:

Senator Connie M. Leyva
Assemblymember Jose Medina
Van Ton-Quinlivan, California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office
Laura Metune, Assembly Committee on Higher Education

CA Fwd contact:

Justin Ewers
916-244-1595
justin@cafwd.org