



October 27, 2015

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Deborah Nankivell

Dear California Community College Board of Governors:

On behalf of the Fresno Business Council, I would like to thank you, the Chancellor and his staff, and the members of the Task Force on Workforce, Job Creation and a Strong Economy for their bold and excellent work and leadership. We highly support the 25 recommendations and urge your adoption and commitment to execution. As we have undertaken a similar effort in the Fresno Madera Region, we are preparing ourselves for our part, the work that can only be done locally.

Founded in 1993, the Fresno Business Council has been steadfast in its commitment to transform the economic and social conditions in the San Joaquin Valley. We have evolved into a stewardship body of the whole. Our board includes top leaders from every sector.

In partnership with our regional platform, the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley, we hosted one of the Strong Workforce Town Halls. Over 130 people, mostly private sector, attended. We used this event as a catalyst to develop a white paper to educate the community and to continue building a vibrant Advanced Manufacturing Cluster to execute the recommendations stemming from both the state and local strategic planning efforts.

Transformation requires both top down and bottom up leadership and commitment to execution. As a complex state, we must advance customized regional strategies and align the resources of the state and federal government seamlessly behind them. Only through a deep and sustained partnership between education and industry can we ensure an economy that is balanced and an educational system that prepares students and adults for life, career, citizenship and life-long learning. Recommendation #19 underscores the importance of regional platforms—the level where we can leverage the strengths of the top and bottom and successfully execute and renew.

California Forward and the California Stewardship Network include seasoned practitioners committed to executing the recommendations and sustaining platforms for the long-term. We have taken responsibility for the conditions and outcomes of our regions individually and collectively as a unified state. We applaud the policy direction of the Board of Governors in taking their both/and approach to restoring California to the Golden State it was intended to become.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deborah J. Nankivell".

Deborah J. Nankivell
Chief Executive Officer