

**ACADEMIC SENATE
OF
THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY**

AS-3437-20/EX
June 26, 2020

**RESPONSE TO SB 121 (AS AMENDED, COMMITTEE ON BUDGET AND FISCAL REVIEW) –
BUDGET ACT OF 2020**

- RESOLVED:** That the Academic Senate of the California State University (ASCSU) find that SB 121 (as amended, Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review) – Budget Act of 2020 presented by the Governor and Legislature (June 22, 2020) for the State of California would produce serious negative implications for the California State University (CSU), the nearly half million students currently enrolled in the CSU, and the thousands of potential students the CSU would no longer be able to serve; and be it further
- RESOLVED:** That the ASCSU express concern that SB 121’s amended budget ecommendations would restrict student access and threaten the quality of education provided, as well as delay graduation due to the anticipated reduction in important academic course offerings and related student services; and be it further
- RESOLVED:** That the ASCSU remind the Governor and Legislature that the CSU has served an extraordinary number of students and alumni who would not otherwise have been supported largely through additional uncompensated work by faculty and staff; and be it further
- RESOLVED:** That the ASCSU request that the Governor and Legislature recognize the extensive additional service required of faculty and staff during the rapid and mandatory transition from face-to-face and hybrid classes to a complete virtual learning environment during spring and over summer 2020 due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, with still no end in sight in terms of the spread of the coronavirus itself as well as additional and essential direct and indirect costs; and be it further
- RESOLVED:** That the ASCSU find that existing research indicates that investment in higher education is advantageous to the public good for both civic and economic reasons, where every dollar invested produces four dollars for the California economy; and be it further
- RESOLVED:** That the ASCSU endorse the need for the CSU to remain accessible to displaced or unemployed individuals seeking to upgrade their marketability through

obtaining a college degree or certificate, especially during the coming months when unemployment in California may reach 20%; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the ASCSU specifically request the Governor and Legislature to mitigate and minimize the proposed \$299 million or 7.5% reduction (pending federal triggers in mid-October 2020) to the CSU budget that appears in SB 121 (as amended, Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review) - Budget Act of 2020; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the ASCSU urge the CSU Board of Trustees and the CSU Chancellor to work with the Governor and Legislature to achieve such requisite mitigations; and be it further

RESOLVED: That this resolution be sent to the Governor, Legislature, Department of Finance (DOF), Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO), CSU Board of Trustees (BOT), CSU Chancellor, CSU campus Presidents, CSU VPs of Finance/ CFOs, CSU Provosts/VPAAs, campus Senate Chairs, California Faculty Association (CFA), CFA campus Chapter Presidents, California State Student Association (CSSA), CSU Emeritus and Retired Faculty & Staff Association (ERFSA), and the CSU Alumni Council.

***RATIONALE:** Since the Donahoe Act of 1960, the State of California has taken pride in seeking two goals in public higher education that are commonly summarized as "quality" and "access." Both of these goals have been enshrined in the California code: "It is the intent of the Legislature that the segments of higher education recognize that quality teaching is the core ingredient of the undergraduate educational experience" (66050). The CSU's success in achieving these goals, in turn, has traditionally been dependent upon the state's willingness to provide the necessary resources, a commitment it also makes explicit in code "The State of California reaffirms its historic commitment to ensure adequate resources to support enrollment growth" (66202.5).*

*Unfortunately, the resources provided by the state in recent years have dramatically undercut the ability of the CSU to achieve both of these goals in even rudimentary form. Shortfalls in funding during this period have been "paid for" by reductions in quality, as outlined in the report *The California State University at the Beginning of the 21st Century*. The CSU has reached the point where additional reductions to the quality of the education it provides are intolerable. To quote a former CSU administrator "access without quality is not access."*

Because the admissions calendar does not correspond to the state budget calendar, the CSU admits students for an academic year prior to receiving the budget that is required to pay for that academic year. In years when the state fails to meet its legislative commitment to support enrollment growth, the CSU must still accept and educate those students who have already been admitted. In the past, the CSU has done so by accepting an on-going deterioration in the quality of the education it has provided as evidenced by:

- *Escalating student-faculty ratios (SFRs)*
- *Increasingly inadequate technology and staffing to support instruction*
- *Declining purchasing power for library collections*
- *Non-competitive salaries combined with California's high cost of living, diminishing our ability to recruit the best faculty and staff from a national pool*
- *Expanded reliance on temporary faculty rather than permanent faculty, leading to a concomitant increase in permanent faculty service loads, and resulting in a declining capacity to mentor and advise students*
- *A declining capacity to mentor and advise students*
- *A continued and significant accumulation of deferred maintenance*
- *A declining capacity to provide students and alumni with letters of reference in support of their career aspirations and other employment opportunities*

Given the state's unwillingness to fully support public higher education, and the fact that increasing tuition in this pandemic economy is not feasible, the CSU has reached the point when reducing admissions and lessening quality become the only answers to less funding. Yet cuts in either quality or access must not be the sole mechanism for surviving difficult budgets, lest we reach a level at which access and quality themselves become insincere, prompting the question "access to what?" To maintain an acceptable level of quality and access, it is necessary for the state to reevaluate its support for the CSU in providing sufficient resources, especially while maintaining student tuition at a reasonable level. Trying to maintain quality while assuring growth in graduation rates and corresponding new enrollment during a time of diminished resources ultimately serves no one and harms the state's future workforce.

In short, with the potential for legislation continuing to increase unfunded mandates for the CSU (e.g. AB 1930, AB 1460, etc.), coupled with the inability to increase tuition in such a severe current recession, to avoid having to reduce enrollment, slow graduation rates, decrease student support, terminate or freeze faculty positions, and further foster the deterioration of our campus infrastructure, the ASCSU urge the Governor and Legislature to use all available resources, including, but not limited to,

allocation of additional state and CSU reserves, GI 2025 funds, federal CARES and HEROES support monies and auxiliary assets, to minimize or eliminate the \$299 million or 7.5% budget reduction (pending federal triggers in mid-October 2020) to the CSU advised in SB 121 (as amended, Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review) - Budget Act of 2020 for the State of California.

Additional information regarding these issues is addressed in prior ASCSU resolutions; these include but are not limited to: AS-3361-19, AS-3361-19, AS-3357-18, AS-3273-16, AS-3237-15, AS-3229-15, AS-3196-14, AS-3149-13, AS-3097-12, AS-3040-11, AS 2920-09, AS 2913-09, AS-2831-08; AS 2812-07; AS-2796-07; AS 2749-06; AS 2772-06; AS 2694-05; AS 2654-04;AS-2612-03; AS-2563-01; AS 2449-99; AS-2418-98; AS-2367-97; AS-2317-96; AS-2258-95.

References:

SB 121(as amended, Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review) – Budget Act of 2020
http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200SB121

Approved Unanimously – June 26, 2020