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April 10, 2016

The Honorable Jose Medina, Chair
Assembly Higher Education Committee
1020 N Street, Room 173
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Subject: Oppose AB 2412 (Chang, as of 3/17/16) Community Colleges:
Incentive Grant Program for Completion of Industry-Recognized Credentials**

Dear Assemblymember Medina:

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges is writing to express its opposition to AB 2412 (Chang), which would establish an incentive grant program for the completion of industry-recognized credentials in specified occupational areas by students enrolled at participating campuses of the California Community Colleges.

The Academic Senate recognizes the desire to increase the number of industry-recognized credentials granted to our students. Multiple efforts are currently underway to revise and expand instructional programs in career technical education in the California Community Colleges. We would welcome additional funding to assist colleges with those efforts.

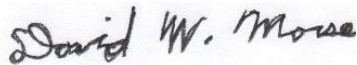
However, AB 2412 would create a performance-based funding model for career technical education programs. Such a model presents multiple problems, one of the most significant of which is that it would not recognize the complexity of the community college mission or of community college student goals. Many career technical education students do not attend community college with the goal of earning a credential, as they may require only a very specific area of training that may be achieved through a more limited number of courses. Many other students may enter their educational programs intending to pursue a credential but are able to obtain employment before completing their programs. Successes such as these, which can lead to new or improved employment for students, would be discouraged by a program that incentivizes completion of credentials, and colleges would be encouraged by fiscal benefit to counsel students to complete programs and units that the students may not truly need.

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In addition, the effectiveness of performance-based funding models has come into increasing question in recent years. As recently as April 6, 2016, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* published an article titled "When States Tie Money to Colleges' Performance, Low-Income Students May Suffer." This article found that "the biggest concern is colleges simply becoming more selective in order to meet these performance standards. There are also concerns about colleges lowering their academic standards in order to improve the number of graduates." Likewise, on January 14, 2016, *The Chronicle* published the article "More States Tie Money to Colleges' Performance, but That May Not Work," which cited a report by the American Educational Research Association that states that performance-based funding "appears to have had little or no effect on graduation or retention rates." These articles by one of the most prestigious academic publications in the United States, citing evidence by a national research society, point out what educators have long known: performance-based funding is not an effective way to promote academic quality and in fact is more likely to have the effect of lowering academic standards and harming students.

For these reasons, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges opposes AB 2412 (Chang, as of 3/17/16). We urge your no vote on this measure. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,



David Morse
President, Academic Senate for California Community Colleges

pc: Assemblymember Ling Ling Chang
Members, Assembly Higher Education Committee