



President

David Morse
Long Beach City College

April 26, 2016

Vice President

Julie Bruno
Sierra College

The Honorable Lorena Gonzalez, Chair
Assembly Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 2114
Sacramento, CA 95814

Secretary

John Stanskas
San Bernardino Valley College

Treasurer

Wheeler North
San Diego Miramar College

Subject: Support if amended, AB 1837 (Low, as of 3/17/16) Postsecondary Education: Office of Higher Education Performance and Accountability

Area A Representative

Grant Goold
American River College

Dear Assemblymember Gonzalez:

Area B Representative

Dolores Davison
Foothill College

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges is writing to express our conditional support for AB 1837 (Low), which would “establish the Office of Higher Education Performance and Accountability as the statewide postsecondary education coordination and planning entity,” and our willingness to express formal support if a single amendment to the bill were adopted.

Area C Representative

John Freitas
Los Angeles City College

Area D Representative

Craig Rutan
Santiago Canyon College

Through the creation of a new state-level office, AB 1837 would undoubtedly involve a degree of cost to the state. However, those costs would be a worthwhile investment given the benefits that this new office might provide.

North Representative

Cleavon Smith
Berkeley City College

The Academic Senate would welcome a replacement for the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC), which performed a significant role in providing data and coordination for higher education in California. CPEC was an asset to the state and has been missed since it was defunded by the governor in 2011.

North Representative

Ginni May
Sacramento City College

South Representative

Vacant

South Representative

Adrienne Foster
West Los Angeles College

South Representative

Vacant

Representative at Large

Cheryl Aschenbach
Lassen College

AB 1837 would create the Office of Higher Education Performance and Accountability, which would, among other functions, “review and make recommendations, as necessary, regarding cross-segmental and interagency initiatives and programs in areas that may include, but are not necessarily limited to, efficiencies in instructional delivery, financial aid, transfer, and workforce coordination” and “act as a clearinghouse for postsecondary education information and as a primary source of information for the Legislature, the Governor, and other agencies,” thus potentially providing support for California higher education that has been needed since the defunding of CPEC. For this reason, the Academic Senate supports the concept and intent behind this bill.

Representative at Large

Randy Beach
Southwestern College

The Academic Senate’s reservation with AB 1837 concerns the composition of the advisory board for the Office of Higher Education Performance and Accountability, which would consist of “the Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Education and the Chairperson of the Assembly Committee on Higher Education, who serve as ex officio members, and six public members with experience in postsecondary

Julie Adams, Ph. D.

Executive Director

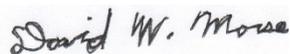
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education.” We very much appreciate the requirement that the members of this advisory board would have experience in higher education. We also appreciate that the Office of Higher Education Performance and Accountability would be required bylaw to “consult with the higher education segments and stakeholders, as appropriate, in the conduct of its duties and responsibilities.”

However, we strongly believe that the functionality and benefits of the Office of Higher Education Performance and Accountability would be greatly enhanced if the advisory board were to include direct representation from the segments of public higher education. We do not suggest that this representation should constitute a majority of the board. If just one representative from each of the three segments of California higher education—one each from the California Community Colleges, the California State University, and the University of California—were to be added, they would still constitute only one-third of what would become nine voting seats on the board. Such a composition would add a direct connection to the segments and allow for voices with direct and current knowledge of the three systems without yielding responsibility for the development of any recommendations to the segments. This structure would lead to stronger, better informed discussion and decisions while preserving the intent of the legislation.

For these reasons, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges expresses its willingness and intent to support Assembly Bill 1837 (Low, as of 03/17/16), if the bill is amended to include segmental representation on the advisory committee. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,



David Morse
President, Academic Senate for California Community Colleges

pc: Assemblymember Evan Low
Members, Assembly Appropriations Committee