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May 31, 2019

The Honorable Anthony Rendon
California State Capitol
State Capitol, Room 219
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Jose Medina
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249

**Subject: SB462 (Stern) Community colleges: Forestland Restoration
Workforce Program (as of 05/25/19)**

Position: Oppose

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC) is writing to express its reluctant opposition to SB462 (Stern, as of 05/25/19). SB462 would require the Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges, working in collaboration with the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, to establish a model curriculum for a forestland restoration workforce program with specific curricular requirements that could be offered at campuses of the California Community Colleges.

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges recognizes that many of our communities have suffered devastating losses due to the wildfires that have plagued our state over the last several years, and we express sincere empathy for the victims and our admiration to Senator Stern for his efforts to identify an amelioration plan for California. We also appreciate that SB462 recognizes the role of the Academic Senate in the development of model curriculum.

However, we are concerned that curriculum, particularly curriculum for career technical fields, should be inherently driven by local economies and workforce needs expressed by employers of the region. The curriculum process required by statute and regulation requires the review and updating of career education curriculum every two years to ensure programs remain relevant to industry standards and current in the use of technology required for employability. The ASCCC is very concerned that by writing elements of curriculum into statute as mandated by SB462, the ability of colleges to adapt to industry expectations and the needs of individual communities or regions will be hindered. The ASCCC and all faculty teaching in systems of higher education emphatically maintain that curricular design is and should be the responsibility and purview of faculty who are experts in their specific disciplines.

The ASCCC has met multiple times with the author's office and has offered and continues to be willing to bring related discipline faculty together through the

May 31, 2019

SB462 (Stern) Community colleges: Forestland Restoration Workforce Program (as of 05/25/19)

Position: Oppose

Page Two

Course Identification Numbering System, C-ID, to dialog about curriculum for fire and forestry technology and about what commonality exists. We hesitate to ensure any specific pre-determined outcome to that curricular dialog, such as a model curriculum that could be used to develop certificates or degrees as expressed in SB462, given the variance of community needs across the state. While there have been amendments to the bill, the continued inclusion of curricular specifics means that we must reluctantly take a position of **oppose to SB462**. The insertion of curriculum into statute does not appropriately address the very laudable goals of the author, goals which we appreciate and share. If the mandate of specific curricular details and outcomes were removed, we would remove our opposition to the bill. In order to achieve the goals of the author, and to remove mandated curricular details, we suggest the following amendments to the bill as currently written:

78307.

(a) The chancellor's office, working in collaboration with the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, shall **convene relevant industry and faculty to consider the** establishment of a model curriculum for a ~~forestland~~ *forest and woodlands* restoration workforce program that could be offered at campuses of the California Community Colleges. This program shall **may consider** provide professional training in implementing prescribed fire projects, including using the tools and operating the equipment necessary for broad scale surface and ladder fuel treatments within the wildland-urban interface and wildlands where appropriate. ~~Students shall learn to operate forest~~ *and woodlands* landscape restoration machinery, to work with tools such as chainsaws, pole saws, chippers, smaller biomass masticators, and small wood processors, and shall learn relevant ~~forestland~~ *forest and woodlands restoration* practices with a particular focus on the economics and operations of small medium scale restoration businesses in California. The workforce program shall also train students in the retrofitting of houses with materials approved by the ~~California~~ State Fire Marshal, and with implementation of community defense techniques approved by the ~~California~~ Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

(b) The model curriculum established under this section shall **may** include guidelines for the presentation of a ~~forestland~~ *forest and woodlands* restoration workforce course at community college campuses that opt to offer this course. These guidelines shall **may** include, ~~but not be limited to~~, recommendations for appropriate instructional materials and supplies and the qualifications to be required of course instructors. The chancellor's office **and Academic Senate for California Community Colleges shall report to the legislature** shall distribute the model curriculum to community college districts no later than January 1, 2021, **the results of the convening of industry experts and faculty**, with the goal of enabling interested community college districts to offer the course to students beginning with the 2021-22 academic year.

(c) ~~Certified graduates of the~~ *forestland *forest and woodlands* restoration workforce course shall be eligible to matriculate into the prescribed fire teams of the ~~California~~ Department of Forestry and Fire Protection or into work with other compatible state and federal forest *and woodlands* restoration efforts and related apprenticeship programs.*

We would also welcome the opportunity to engage in continued dialog with the author regarding the wording of the SB462. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

Respectfully,



John Stankas, President

May 31, 2019

SB462 (Stern) Community colleges: Forestland Restoration Workforce Program (as of 05/25/19)

Position: Oppose

Page Three

Cc: Honorable Henry Stern

Chris Ferguson, Department of Finance

Mónica Henestroza, Office of Speaker Rendon

Ian Johnson, Principal Consultant, Senate Education Committee

Laura Metune, Vice Chancellor of Governmental Relations

Olgalilia Ramirez, Consultant, Senate Education Committee

Jeanice Warden-Washington, Chief Consultant, Assembly Committee on Higher Education