



ACADEMIC SENATE
for California Community Colleges
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July 8, 2021

The Honorable Connie Leyva
Chair, Senate Committee on Education
State Capitol, Room 4061
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 928 (Berman) – Opposed Unless Amended

Dear Senator Leyva,

The undersigned organizations are respectively opposed to **AB 928 (Berman) unless it is amended with the amendments below**. While we agree with the author and the sponsors of the measure that the transfer process between community colleges and our four-year partners needs to be improved, we do not think AB 928 (Berman) as written will have a positive impact for our students. AB 928 (Berman) will create a committee designated with providing recommendations towards changing the transfer process, a single general education transfer pathway for students intending to transfer to either the University of California (UC) or the California State University (CSU), and automatically place students in an associate degree for transfer (ADT) program for the CSU regardless of their academic goals or intentions.

Firstly, we are grateful for the recent amendments demonstrating the author's understanding of the importance of including the institutions and groups that will ultimately be responsible for implementing the committee's recommendations. It is imperative the committee have balanced representation from the system it affects as practitioner's input is critical to the discussion on how to reform the transfer process. Following this line of reasoning, we also respectfully ask that a member appointed by the California Intersegmental Articulation Council be added to the committee.

While we appreciate the understanding and respect the author has made in recognizing the critical importance of those being responsible for creating transfer opportunities in this policy discussion, we continue to have significant concerns about the other proposals in the bill. Per extensive conversations with faculty, staff, trustees, CEOs and other stakeholders, we have come

to the conclusion that the following mandates would be detrimental to increasing student success or closing achievement gaps.

While we agree in principle that a simplified transfer process between the UC and CSU is better for students who would like to transfer from community colleges to our four-year partners, we do not believe that AB 928 (Berman) wholly achieves this goal. We oppose the consolidation of IGETC and CSU GE Breadth pathways and recommend this section of the bill be removed. The pathways have specific class requirements and consolidating them would lead to less class variety. UC accepts far fewer courses for GE than the CSU, so this change would eliminate viable courses and programs, and create additional barriers for students pursuing transfer to the CSU. It would also remove viable course options for CSU-bound students and ultimately eliminate community college faculty purview regarding academic and curricular matters. Finally – regarding the University of California’s near constitutional independence from mandates imposed by the state legislature – we have significant questions on how this would be implemented. We therefore ask you to consider removing this provision and instead ask the newly created committee to consider how to develop alignment in a student-friendly manner.

We also oppose the automatic placement of students in an ADT pathway and recommend this be eliminated in the bill. This overlooks the many students, specifically place-bound and first-generation students, who may not plan on transferring, or who hope to transfer to a UC, private school, or out-of-state institution. Furthermore, automatic placement into a transfer program without consent from a student goes against the Guided Pathway framework of flexible transfer pipelines with a definitive placement that you, the Senate Committee on Education, the State Senate and the Assembly, have been directing our institutions to implement. Finally, while ADTs guarantee a spot at a CSU, they do not guarantee admission at the local CSU. Providing students with better information about their pathway options would afford them self-agency, which leads to closing equity gaps. Similar to the single pathway provision in the above paragraph, this item requires more discussion and should be removed from the legislation and instead charge the committee with discussing how to better leverage these pathways for our students.

As those who work for and are directly responsible to the success of community college students, we recognize that our students face barriers to transfer to our four-year partners. We appreciate the Legislature’s and Assemblymember Berman’s efforts to put student needs first and believe the proposed amendments above would best support students. Based on our practical experience on how AB 928 (Berman) will be implemented, we respectfully ask that you amend the bill to include the changes we noted. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



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Faculty Association of California Community Colleges



Ryan McElhinney, Policy and Advocacy Manager
Community College League of California



Dolores Davison, President
Academic Senate of California Community Colleges



Jeffrey Michels, President
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