



THE LEAGUE LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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Governor Schwarzenegger Completes Actions on Bills

By midnight of October 11, 2009, Governor Schwarzenegger completed actions on over 700 bills sent by the Legislature before adjourning for the Fall Interim Recess. According to the LA Times, Schwarzenegger approved 696 bills and vetoed 257 this year. Several legislative resolutions were also chaptered without gubernatorial action.

Since the Legislature recessed on September 11th, the Senate met again for floor session on October 14th for both regular order of business and business under the Third Extraordinary Session (3X). Several bills were enacted, including those held hostage when Senate republicans refused to vote for bills requiring two-thirds vote. Bills approved by the Senate on October 14th included SB 599 (Negrete-McLeod): Workforce Development/Business and Professions Code, AB 187 (Evans): Cal Grant Decentralization Pilot Project, and other several budget-related bills. The Assembly met for floor session on October 26th and passed several of bills, including AB 187. Gubernatorial action is required within 12 days following receipt from the legislative enrollment process.

The League would like to thank all of the local colleges who responded to the call to action on several bills signed into law by Governor Schwarzenegger. The governor approved 5 of the 6 bills (AB 386, AB 669, AB 774, AB 947, AB 1295, and SB 410) called for action in the September 21st League Alert. A tally was made of gubernatorial actions on bills supported or opposed by the League – the governor approved 17 bills supported by the League; vetoed 5 bills

supported, and approved 1 bill opposed by the League. Two resolutions supported by the League were chaptered into law (ACR 65 and AJR 10). Legislation that was supported by the League and vetoed by the governor were American Recovery and Reinvestment Act related bills.

Cal Grant Alternative Delivery System Pilot Program Awaits Signature

AB 187 (Evans): Student Aid: Cal Grant Alternative Delivery System Pilot Program passed both the Assembly and the Senate and is on the way to the governor. The bill will restore \$4 million previously vetoed from the operating budget of the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC). The bill also implements the Cal Grant Alternative Delivery System Pilot Program – an alternative delivery system pilot program for decentralization of Cal Grants. Colleges participating in the pilot program will function as one-stop centers for financial aid information for all students, parents, and high school and community college counselors. The BOG, UC Regents, and CSU Trustees will select the participating institutions from their respective segments. Select institutions will pay the costs associated with implementing the pilot alternative system. Governor Schwarzenegger has 12 days to act on the bill.

The Select Committee on Improving Government Meets

The Select Committee on Improving Government met on October 22nd to discuss the legislative branch and budget process reforms. The panelists for the first hearing were representatives of elected officials, policy think tanks, academic institutions, and media analysts. The first hearing generated plenty news accounts for the candid remarks provided by State Treasurer Bill Lockyer. Legislative Analyst Mac Taylor spoke to strengthening the budget process. Problems identified were the weakened budgetary process, little effective oversight, and the Legislature's position relative to the Executive Branch.

The committee will hold five more hearings at various locations throughout the state. Topics to be addressed are: the initiative process, ballot-box budgeting, legislative oversight of state government agencies, and the relationship between state and local governments. The committee plans to develop and introduce reform legislation in January. Another informational hearing will be held on November 12th, to discuss ballot-box budgeting and initiative reforms. The hearing will be in Oakland at the Elihu Harris State Building. Cal Channel video of the October 22nd hearing and presentation can be viewed at:

[Assembly Select Committee on Improving State Government Part 1](#) (Legislative Branch Reform)

[Assembly Select Committee on Improving State Government Part 2](#) (Budget Process Reform)

Little Hoover Commission Reviews California's Economic Development

The Little Hoover Commission (LHC) is reviewing the state's economic development activities. The Commission will assess whether various economic development offices and programs are achieving goals, whether there is overlap of activities, and the leveraging of other federal, state, and local programs. Included in the study will be the Economic and Workforce Development

through the California Community Colleges. The Economic Development Subcommittee of the LHC will meet on November 9, 2009 at the Los Angeles Economic Development Corporations, located on 444 Flower Street in LA. For more information please go to www.littlehoover@lhc.ca.gov or contact project manager Eric Stearn at (916) 445-2125.

California Community College 2010 Legislative Program is Reviewed

The Consultation Legislative Task Force met on October 30th to review and discuss feedback from the Consultation Council on three legislative proposals considered by the Task Force and Council for the 2010 CCC Legislative Program. The proposals are:

- **CCC Assess** – legislation proposed to create a centralized storage and delivery data warehouse of CCC assessment instruments, test scores, and other data used in the assessment/placement process. All costs of a central delivery system will be borne by a set-aside of Prop 98 funds (TTIP funds).
- **Streamlining Reports** – legislation proposed to allow the Chancellor’s Office to streamline current reports, remove obsolete requirements from statute, and consolidate reports that address similar policy issues.
- **Federal Veteran’s “Earmark”** – legislation proposed to persuade Congress to earmark federal funds to support local community colleges meet the unique needs of returning veterans. The federal funds would be awarded on competitive basis to colleges that submit proposals to the CCCCO. The funding request is \$3.5 million to fund one system wide veteran’s coordinator in the Chancellor’s office, and to distribute competitive grants to colleges with the largest number of student veterans and the most strategic use of the funding.

The State Treasurer Releases the 2009 Debt Report

The annual “2009 Debt Report” issued by State Treasurer Bill Lockyer in October, concluded that the fiscal conditions experienced by California will cause debt service to consume a larger portion of the State’s General Fund. The amount of debt service will double from \$6 billion to more than \$12 billion in seven years, increasing from 6.7 % to 10.5 % of the General Fund – the highest debt service cost in history. The report states that the rising debt service costs during the next three budget cycles will “crimp the availability of General Fund monies to pay for state services.” Lockyer stated that the rising debt service payments “will force even more cuts to vital services already reeling from severe budget reductions.” The report recommends (1) California should adopt a Master Plan for Infrastructure Financing and Development and (2) The Legislature and Governor should begin in 2009-2010 to craft a thoughtful and effective response to projected growing deficits, focusing on the State’s operating budgets and growing deficits and a reasoned assessment of the State’s longer-term fiscal condition. The report can be viewed at www.treasurer.ca.gov

“Repair California” Calls for a State Constitutional Convention

“Repair California,” a broad based organization of advocacy groups, business leaders, and reformers, filed two proposed state initiatives for the November 2010 statewide ballot calling for

a limited State Constitutional Convention. The process begins with filing for title and summary with the State Attorney General. Once title and summary are obtained, initiatives are circulated for petition for 150 days. Initiatives proposing to amend the constitution require signatures equal to 8% of all votes cast for governor in the last gubernatorial election. 694,354 qualified signatures are needed to qualify for the November 2010 election. The first proposed initiative, the "Citizens' Constitutional Convention Act," proposes to amend the California Constitution to allow citizens to call for a Constitutional Convention by a simple majority vote. The second proposed initiative "The Call for a Citizens' Limited Constitutional Convention", would call for the Convention and set forth rules and principles. For more information please go to: <http://www.repaircalifornia.org>

There will be an informational hearing in the Senate Labor and Industrial Relations Committee on November 17th in the State Capitol, Room 2040, regarding, "Putting Californian's Back to Work: Moving Towards Recovery." For more information, please contact Alma Perez at alma.perez@sen.ca.gov.

Community College League of California's Annual Conference

The Community College League of California's Annual Conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency SFO in Burlingame on November 18th-21st. For full details on registration and conference topics, please go to: <http://www.ccleague.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3363>

New Accountability System to Be Proposed

The Lumina and Gates Foundations have joined with leaders from AACC and ACCT to work on development of a new national, voluntary initiative designed to measure and compare community college accountability, with the hope that it will enable colleges to improve their programs and graduate more students on time and at a lower cost.

Eight community colleges, including Laney College in Oakland, will pilot the new program; then, in two years, the project will be expanded and piloted in up to 20 more localities by 2011. Ultimately, project organizers hope their new system will be adopted by community colleges across the country to help improve the outcomes of their students. Among the elements under consideration is the "unit record system" which would track students' progress throughout their education careers, including following students beyond community colleges.

Kent Phillippe, director of research at AACC, helped to plan this project, and said there are few details of exactly what metrics this universal system would include, as the initiative is still in its nascent stages and the pilot sites still do not know exactly what data they will be tracking. Still, he argued that the project's creation reflects a sentiment among community college officials that the common metrics that have long been used to judge their institutions' relative success -- led by the federal graduation rate -- are insufficient and do not help institutions improve themselves. He also added that some new metrics are needed and must be developed. Phillippe further states that, "We need to try to build on progression measures of students and not just focus on the final outcome of degree and certificate attainment." Among the elements in the progression are "certain points along the learning path toward reaching graduation, such as the attainment of 30

credit hours or 60 credit hours or after the progression from development to college-level coursework [all points after which it is more likely that a student will graduate]. We also need to catch the things that community colleges do that aren't necessarily credential specific, such as work force and community development. Maybe we could track job placement rates in these programs or show the income change among students who've taken x number of units."

EDGE/Skills2Compete Issues Report on Mid-Skills Jobs

California's Forgotten Middle-Skills Jobs argues that as California recovers from the recent deep recession, 2.7 million job openings (43 percent of all job openings) that will require more training than a high school diploma but not necessarily a Bachelor's degree are projected to be available in California. However, shortages of trained workers in some of these industries already appeared before the economic downturn and will slow recovery and growth in the near future unless the state prioritizes investment and alignment of resources in training and education for these in-demand occupations. These positions, including highly skilled, technical, and high-wage occupations such as fire fighters, electricians, medical technicians, and mechanics, offer California workers the opportunity for economic security and prosperity if they have the appropriate education and training, which is available at California community colleges.

EDGE/Skills2Compete therefore calls for every California worker to have access to the equivalent of up to two years of education or training past high school - leading to a vocational credential, industry certification, or the first two years of college. Every person, including communities of color and those with barriers to success, must also have access to the basic skills needed to pursue such education.

[http://www.skills2compete.org/site/c.fhLIKYPPLuF/b.5540699/k.9C1B/State Campaigns](http://www.skills2compete.org/site/c.fhLIKYPPLuF/b.5540699/k.9C1B/State_Campaigns)

Strengthening Community Colleges' Influence on Economic Mobility

The Pew Charitable Trusts has issued a new report asserting that, for many who would otherwise be either jobless or under-employed, a good choice is a high-demand career field which can be learned at a community college. Pew found that students earning a community college degree can increase their earnings by \$7,900, a 29 percent increase over those with only a high school diploma; and that student backgrounds, income levels and high school achievements are less important to career success than their choice of classes and field of study. They cited a lower performing high school student who chooses a high return field in college, such as health care, can earn an average of \$48,000 per year, which is \$4,000 more than the "A" or "B plus" student who concentrates in fields such as fine arts and humanities.

They also cite community colleges as an important avenue to upward mobility irrespective of a student's background, income level, or high school accomplishments. This report finds that an associate degree is particularly meaningful for low-income, high-achieving high school students - over half of whom transfer to a four-year college, and, of those who transfer, three-quarters earn a bachelor's degree. In a time of high unemployment, community colleges are a critical stepping stone for people to increase their skills and earnings potential. The colleges also provide resources, including career counseling, to educate students about the classes and fields of study that have the potential for higher returns, such as health care and computer science.

http://www.economicmobility.org/reports_and_research/other/other?id=0010

California Public Interest Research Group (CalPIRG) Supports Increased Financial Aid

Tuition rates at California's community college may be low compared to those elsewhere, but that should not lead legislators to ignore the difficulty so many students have paying, says the latest CalPIRG report entitled, *Working Too Hard to Make the Grade*. This effort surveyed community college students across the state and asked about their “work habits, their understanding of financial aid and how these factors might affect their academic success.” The group hopes the rampant misconceptions about financial aid highlighted in the survey will influence state legislators to fund counseling programs so that students can take full advantage of what is available.

“While California community college [tuitions] are the lowest in the nation — an accomplishment which we all can be proud of — they comprise only about 5 percent of the total cost of attendance,” the report reads. “The full cost of attendance that community college students must shoulder, including housing, food, and transportation, is much higher than the \$780 that a typical full-time student pays in [tuition]. According to the California Student Aid Commission, total student costs for the nine-month 2009-10 academic year will total \$17,286 for a typical full-time student.”

To determine how well students bear this cost burden, the survey asked three basic questions about financial aid. 53% responded incorrectly that they “have to go to school full time to be eligible for financial aid;” just 50% knew that “taking more classes per term could increase their financial aid award;” and 46% mistakenly thought that financial aid “could not be used to cover living expenses, or said that they did not know what it could be used for.”

More students (13%) answered all three of these questions incorrectly than answered all three correctly (10%). 44% of students, however, only answered one of these questions correctly. The survey responses seem to indicate that there is a direct relationship between understanding financial aid and the likelihood of applying for it. Students who answered more questions correctly were more likely to have applied for aid. 70% of those students who answered all three questions correctly had applied for aid, while only 44% of those who did not answer any correctly had applied for aid.

In addition, only 50% of the students surveyed who had received a BOG waiver also received Pell grants, although most students who meet the “income requirements [to qualify for the fee waiver] are likely to be eligible for federal grant aid.” This further suggests that most of these students only filled out a form for the fee waiver and did not complete the FAFSA.

Beyond grants, more than half of the students surveyed described loans as an option which “should only be considered as a last resort” or “as something that they would never consider under any circumstances.” Illustrating this point, 46% responded that, if they were in a class in which they could not afford textbooks, they would “prefer to push through without books or drop the class altogether rather than take out a student loan.” Of those who would consider loans, nearly as many responded that they would put their debt on a credit card as said that they would take out a federal loan.

“These data not only show that community college students tend to be debt averse, but also that those who do not consider borrowing may not have the information they need to make wise financial decisions, which may lead them to take on debt that is more expensive in the long term,” the report reads.

Finally, the survey found that the average student worked about 23 hours per week to help pay for his/her education. Less than a quarter of these working students reported that “they are balancing their work and studies well.” More than 25% said “they had to drop classes or whole semesters due to the number of hours they spend at their jobs.” The average student dropped 2.5 classes and 1.8 semesters because of work conflicts.

Saffron Zomer, author of the report and director of CalPIRG’s campus program, said, “When the general public in California talks about our community colleges, they typically only say that they have super-low fees or that they’re cheap and affordable institutions,” Zomer said. “People with that mindset are not invested in the fact that our community colleges are not being properly funded. We think it’s important to indicate that these students work long hours often don’t understand a lot about how financial aid works and need help.”

Zomer argues that, especially amidst the state’s massive budget shortfalls, “programs designed to counsel students and help them understand their financial aid options should be adequately funded.” She also recommends that the State Legislature increase funding for Cal Grants. The report suggests that “we need to be discussing how to make Cal Grants more effective, not whether we can afford them at all.”

CalPIRG has started compiling real-life accounts into a yearbook of sorts chronicling what it is like “to juggle class, job and family” in a project called “[Getting to Graduation](#).” They are collecting a set of stories from students in every legislator’s district to put a personal face on this problem and in hopes of improving their understanding of these issues.

This study is available online at: <https://www.calpirg.org/media-internet/reports/media--the-internet-reports/working-too-hard-to-make-the-grade>

Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Policy on Degree Completion and Improving Student Outcomes

Steps to Success Analyzing Milestone Achievement to Improve Community College Student Outcomes. Colleen Moore, Nancy Shulock, and Jeremy Offenstein. Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Policy, October 2009

http://www.csus.edu/ihelp/PDFs/R_CCC_Milestones.pdf

According to the authors, “This report offers a framework for guiding educators in using available knowledge and tools to improve student outcomes. It shows how better use of available data can help diagnose why students fail to make progress toward a degree and can better demonstrate the progress students make along the pathway to a degree. The framework consists of two factors: *milestones*, or intermediate educational achievements that students reach along the path to degree completion, and *indicators of success*, or academic patterns students follow including remediation, gateway courses, and credit accumulation, that have been demonstrated in research studies to correlate with forward progress and completion.”

Student Progress Toward Degree Completion: Lessons from the Research Literature. Colleen Moore and Nancy Shulock. Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Policy, September 2009.

http://www.csus.edu/ihelp/PDFs/R_Student_Progress_Toward_Degree_Completion.pdf

This report argues that, “Efforts to measure student success have generally been limited to retention, graduation, and transfer rates, ... but these measures are inadequate to fully understand student progress and degree completion. They are especially inadequate in providing guidance as to how to *improve* student progress and degree completion... [given the multiple missions of the colleges and the enrollment patterns of students].”

“The research literature on postsecondary student success points to achievements along the college pathway [i.e., intermediate patterns] that may give students momentum toward successful degree completion. Tracking these intermediate outcomes would allow institutions to identify where student progress stalls, and would point them toward administrative and curricular reforms that could increase degree completion. Federal and state governments could use the information to set better policies that would enable institutions to help more students succeed. Accountability systems that recognize intermediate outcomes may also reduce institutional resistance to measuring student success, particularly among community colleges who serve the students with the most challenges to overcome on the path to degree completion.”

CEO Changes

- Eddie Hernandez, superintendent/president at Rancho since 1997 has announced that he will retire in June 2010.
- Napa Valley College has named veteran college administrator and current NVC Foundation board member Armond Phillips as interim president, in response to the unexpected death of college president Chris McCarthy. Phillips’ position became effective October 5th.
- Frank Chong, president of Laney College since 2006, has been appointed deputy assistant secretary for community colleges in the US Office of Education, effective January 4, 2010.