



ASSOCIATION OF CHIEF BUSINESS OFFICIALS

May 2, 2013

The Honorable Mike Gatto
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 2114
Sacramento, California 95814
FAX: (916) 319-2181

Re: AB 806 (Wilk: Fifty Percent Law) SUPPORT

As President of the California Community Colleges' Association of Chief Business Officials (ACBO), which represents all business officials within the 72 California Community College Districts and the 112 community colleges throughout our state, I am respectfully requesting that you approve Assembly Bill 806 when it is heard by the Assembly Appropriations Committee on May 15th.

ACBO provides statewide leadership on California community college business and financial matters and supports this much-needed legislation, which would provide community colleges with increased flexibility in expending its general fund revenue to enable the colleges to better meet the needs of students and satisfy the recently enacted Student Success reforms. AB 806 would allow colleges to include the salaries of faculty counselors and faculty librarians, and other necessary costs of out-of-classroom faculty duties (program review, development & assessment of student learning outcomes, curriculum development, articulation, etc.) as expenditures allowable under the Fifty Percent Law. All of these duties and responsibilities along with faculty counselors and librarians are critical to the California community colleges Student Success reforms.

The Fifty Percent Law was enacted in 1961 as Education Code 17503 to promote class size reductions for what was at that time a K-14 (i.e., K-12 and "junior college") education framework for the state to ensure the allocation of additional funding so more instructors could be hired in order to reduce the number of students in each classroom. Over the past fifty years, community colleges (formerly identified as "junior colleges" when they were tied to K-12 education) have undergone considerable changes including being established in the late 1980s as a separate education system within the "higher education" framework of the State of California; however, the Fifty Percent Law was never revised in regard to community college education.

ACBO would also like to emphasize that the AB 806 legislation is **revenue neutral**, and does not require any additional state resources to support enactment of the bill. However, the passage of this bill would provide much needed flexibility at a critical time for our community colleges. With the passage of SB 1440 to create new transfer pathways to UC and CSU, as well as the implementation of the Student Success Act of 2012 (SB 1456), the community college system is making great strides forward in implementing measures to boost student

success without any additional state revenue. Unfortunately, most of the activities so critical to student retention and completion *are not currently allowable* within the existing Fifty Percent Law criteria. In fact, the direct cost of implementing 21 of the 22 recommendations made by the Student Success Task Force, all fall *on the wrong side* of the Fifty Percent Law! This means for nearly every dollar spent on implementing a Student Success reform, two dollars must be found making the existing model's criteria unsustainable and continues **to not recognize the true cost of educating our community college students.**

If our community colleges are to truly show progress in meeting the requirements for implementing the student success reforms, we must have the spending flexibility proposed by AB 806. We appreciate your consideration of this issue, and we stand ready to provide you with whatever additional information is needed to gain your support of AB 806. If you wish to contact me in regard to this request, I may be reached at my office at the San Diego Community College District, where I serve as the Executive Vice Chancellor, Business and Technology Services (619) 388-6975 or via email at bdowd@sdccd.edu.

On behalf of the ACBO Board of Directors, I respectfully request your **AYE** vote when AB 806 comes before the Appropriations Committee on May 15th.

Yours truly,



Dr. Bonnie Ann Dowd, President
Association of Chief Business Officials (ACBO), California
Community College Districts

cc: ACBO Board of Directors
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