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Assembly
California Legislature

SHARON QUIRK-SILVA
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, SIXTY-FIFTH DISTRICT

March 15, 2017

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RE: Tuition Increase Proposal for the 2017-2018 Academic Year

Dear Board of Trustee Members,

Ahead of the upcoming Board of Trustee Meeting on Wednesday, March 22, I and the following Members of the California Legislature urge the Board to reconsider increasing tuition for the 2017-2018 Academic Year.

As noted on your agenda documents, I have authored Assembly Bill 393 titled the Student Protection Act that would freeze tuition and fees at the CSU, and which you have recommended to oppose. It is my belief that funding our systems of higher education should not be done on the backs of students and their families. For this reason, we the undersigned strongly oppose this tuition increase which would continue to put a burden on low-income and middle-class families.

I authored AB 393 because I understand the significant financial challenges our students are facing. The long-term shortfall in state funding that has accumulated over the years has had massive implications for students, particularly when it comes to skyrocketing tuition, which has grown 923% over the last 30 years. Students are already strapped with the highest annual tuitions in California history (which have more than doubled since 2006 to $5,472 for CSU). Other harsh realities such as food insecurity and housing costs have made it more difficult for students to finish college in four years. According to a 2016 study commissioned by the CSU Chancellor's Office, titled *"Serving Displaced and Food Insecure Students in the CSU"*, one in 10 students today is homeless and one in five does not always have enough food to eat. CSU students also work – not for extra spending money but to meet their basic needs. Some 40 percent are no longer their parents' dependent and must work to support themselves, and nearly 25 percent have dependents of their own to support.

Simultaneously, some middle-class students, in particular, are increasingly finding it tough to navigate between two financial realities: Their family incomes are too high for them receive financial aid but too low to pay for much — or sometimes any — of their schooling.

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This is very troubling because these high tuition costs constrict access to our institutions of higher education and deny students and their families the dream of obtaining a degree, and runs counter to the promise of the Master Plan.

At a time where the Public Policy Institute of California projects that California will be short 1.1 million college graduates by 2030, we cannot afford to be pricing students out of our higher education system.

Rather, we have to make sure we are assisting as many students as possible with the least amount of debt possible.

Our economy and the quality of life in California have been built in large part because we have had such a large, accessible public higher education system.

This is not the time to give up and say we can't do it anymore. We have to educate our people for our kids and for the future of this state.

Again we ask you to reconsider the way in which we fund higher education.

Please contact my office with any additional questions you may have.

Respectfully Yours,

Sharon Quirk-Silva,
Assemblymember, 65th District

Lorena Gonzalez-Fletcher
Assemblymember, 78th District

Sabrina Cervantes
Assemblymember, 60th District

Marc Steinorth
Assemblymember, 40th District

Patrick O'Donnell
Assemblymember, 70th District

Kevin Kiley
Assemblymember, 70th District

Eduardo Garcia
Assemblymember, 56th District

Kansen Chu
Assemblymember, 25th District

Freddie Rodriguez
Assembleymember, 52th District

Evan Low
Assembleymember, 28th District

Timothy S. Grayson
Assembleymember, 14th District

Al Muratsuchi
Assembleymember, 66th District

Mike A.Gipson
Assembleymember, 64th District

Ian C. Calderon
Assembleymember, 57th District

Rob Bonta
Assembleymember, 18th District

Chris R. Holden
Assembleymember, 41st District

Tom Daly
Assembleymember, 69th District

David Chiu
Assembleymember, 17th District

Eloise Gómez Reyes
Assembleymember, 47th District

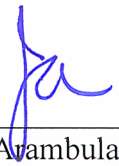
Cristina Garcia
Assembleymember, 58th District

Rudy Salas, Jr.
Assembleymember, 32nd District

Mark Stone
Assembleymember, 29th District

Miguel Santiago
Assembleymember, 53rd District

Catharine B. Baker
Assembleymember, 16th District



Joaquin Arambula
Assemblymember, 31st District