



September 21, 2013

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Governor, State of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 955
Request for VETO

Position: OPPOSE
As amended on 9/5/13

Dear Governor Brown:

On behalf of the SSSCC Region V, a representative of Eleven (11) Colleges with a total student enrollment collectively of 119,763 students, we the region write to express our strong opposition to Assembly Bill 955 (Williams), as amended on September 5, 2013. AB 955 provides state authorization for a two-tier fee system in six California community colleges. We are opposed because this legislation will fundamentally undermine the community college mission of open, equal access for all.

California community colleges are a great equalizer and an irreplaceable driver of social mobility for California's working class, Latino and African American communities in particular. The community college's role as a great equalizer across race and class is possible because under current law, all students – regardless of educational, economical or family background – have equal access opportunity at their community college.

AB 955 would break this proud tradition by creating unequal access to six public community colleges. By our calculation AB 955 fees will be higher than CSU nonresident fees and run over \$1000 for a 4-unit community college course. Current community college fees for that same course are only \$184. By raising student fees so dramatically, AB 955 will effectively deny equal, open access to the Californians who depend on our community colleges most for public higher education and ultimately, the goal of social mobility.

Furthermore, AB 955 will break the Proposition 30 promise of low student fees, and diminish focus on real course availability for all in return for access to courses for those with greater economic means. Thousands of students of all socioeconomic backgrounds fought for Prop. 30 as a means to maintain affordable access to higher education. AB 955 runs counter to this goal and is a betrayal of the promises made to students and their families during the campaign to pass Prop. 30.

For these reasons, we urge you to VETO AB 955.

Sincerely,

Matthew Christman
Chair
SSCCC Region V