June 27, 2013

Honorable Kevin de León, Chair  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
State Capitol, Room 2206  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Assembly Bill 1241 (Weber) Student financial Aid: Cal Grant Program

Position: Support

Dear Senator de León,

The California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office is pleased to support Assembly Bill 1241 by Assemblymember Weber, which would extend by an additional year the period of student eligibility for Cal Grant A and B Entitlement Awards. Currently, there are two options to be eligible for Cal Grant A and B Entitlement Awards. Applicants either apply during the year of their high school graduation, or apply by March 2 one academic year after their high school graduation.

Existing law regarding the short eligibility period for the Cal Grant Entitlement Award penalizes students who do not attend college immediately after high school graduation. Economic hardship and lack of knowledge about financial aid opportunities prevent many students from pursuing a college education immediately after graduation. In addition, the skyrocketing price of a college education is prompting more academically qualified students to work full-time for a few years immediately after graduation to save money. This decision often means a lost opportunity to apply for these financial aid funds.

Community college students face tremendous unmet financial need which jeopardizes their chances for successful completion of a college education. Cal Grant A and B Entitlement Awards would be most welcome to help community college students meet the growing challenges of college affordability and completion of education goals.

The Chancellor’s Office thanks you for your consideration of this measure and urges your support. If you or your staff have any questions, please contact me at (916) 445-4434.

Sincerely,

Vincent W. Stewart  
Vice Chancellor, Government Relations  
California Community College Chancellor’s Office

cc: Assemblymember Shirley Weber  
Members of the Senate Committee on Appropriations