



Statement Regarding Governor Newsom's May Revision of the 2020-21 Budget Release

Kristen Soares, President, Association of Independent California Colleges & Universities

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The Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU) is disappointed that Governor Gavin Newsom's May Revision to the budget seeks to balance the budget through a Cal Grant award reduction to low-income students. While we understand that the state is facing an unprecedented fiscal challenge, it cannot decrease students' access to higher education opportunities when they need it most. Furthermore, we question whether this cut meets the maintenance of effort requirements set forth in Section 18008 of the CARES ACT, which explicitly requires states to maintain support for higher education, including state need-based financial aid.

This cut of \$1,028, on top of two decades of cuts and stagnation, further lowers the maximum award amount from \$9,084 to \$8,056. Amidst this economic uncertainty faced by California families caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, now is not the time to cut state financial aid for students that attend nonprofit higher education institutions, when the state needs to produce the workforce that will help us recover from this crisis and recession.

We need to prepare our future workforce now more than ever. The independent, nonprofit sector awards 40% of the health profession degrees in the state. Indeed, we train and prepare our frontline workers—doctors, nurses, and researchers the state relies on when emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, occur. These students are our future leaders.

Over 28,000 Cal Grant students attend independent, nonprofit colleges and universities. They reflect the rich diversity of California. They face the same challenges and have the same need as their counterparts in the public institutions. They are equally deserving of a strong, stable Cal Grant award as those that attend the University of California or California State University. The state and institutions must work in partnership to help them make their college dreams a reality.

AICCU respectfully urges Governor Newsom to keep his commitment to college access and affordability and requests the Legislature to reject this inequitable cut to this award that is so important to the state's most vulnerable students.

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About AICCU

The Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU) is comprised of 85 independent, nonprofit colleges and universities, which make up the Independent California Colleges and Universities (ICCU) sector. The ICCU sector plays a pivotal role in the development of the state's model of higher education offerings and in making California a symbol of innovation across the globe. Within California, ICCU institutions award over 20 percent of all undergraduate degrees and over 50 percent of graduate degrees, making them the largest preparers of California's advanced workforce.