Governor Gavin Newsom’s May Revision outlines numerous investments that are critical to the prosperity of our state and its residents. From investments in our communities, K-12 schools, and public higher education, there is much in the Governor’s May Revision that will put Californians on a path to stability and prosperity for years to come.

However, this proposed budget is woefully inadequate in recognizing the needs of students in California’s 85 independent, nonprofit universities, the critical role of these institutions in educating and training California’s workforce, and their pivotal role within their communities. This past year has highlighted our state’s urgent need for more medical and frontline workers, treating patients and conducting the medical research that will end the next global disease. The independent, nonprofit sector awards 40% of the health profession degrees in the state, educating the professionals who will care for those with medical need. Our institutions are the leading producer of teacher credential candidates, helping to address the teacher shortages and ensure that students in the K-12 pipeline are provided the most critical resource—well-educated and trained teachers. To have forgotten the low-income California students in this sector, during this once-in-a-lifetime investment opportunity, is simply shortsighted.

As the governor and Legislature work to maximize the historic $75.7 billion budget surplus, they must include a focus on expanding higher education opportunities for all students. This must include leveraging capacity at AICCU institutions if we are to fully commit to meeting the degree attainment goals and workforce needs proposed by the governor. This must include a long-overdue increase to the Cal Grant award for low-income students who attend an independent, accredited, nonprofit college or university. This award has not been increased in over 20 years, gradually diminishing the purchasing power of the award for more than 28,000 Cal Grant students, nearly half of whom are first-generation college students. We must invest in all low-income students.

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About AICCU
The Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU) is comprised of the over 80 independent, nonprofit colleges and universities, which make up the Independent California Colleges and Universities (ICCU) sector. The ICCU sector plays a pivotal role in developing the state’s model of higher education offerings and 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.