

March 25, 2015

The Honorable Dr. Richard Pan
Member of the State Senate
State Capitol, Room 5164
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 373 (Pan): California Community Colleges: overload assignments and full-time faculty percentage

Position: Oppose

Dear Senator Pan:

The Kern, Los Rios, Pasadena, Peralta, San Diego, South Orange County and Yuba Community College Districts must regrettably oppose your SB 373. As proposed to be amended, the bill would set a district cap equivalent to the number of part-time faculty currently employed for the 2014-15 fiscal year. If a district wants to grow beyond the total number of course sections offered during the 2014-15 fiscal year it can only do so by hiring more full-time tenure-track faculty. The districts would not be allowed to hire more part-time faculty than the college had on staff during the 2014-15 fiscal year when the cap was set. The bill would also prohibit newly hired tenure-track faculty from performing any type of overload assignments during their four year probationary period until they become tenured regular employees.

A healthy cadre of full-time faculty is critical to student success and the campus community. Full-time faculty are better able to provide support services to students and serve in leadership positions on campus and within departments. Additionally, research suggests that greater exposure to full-time faculty can increase student success. It has been, for a long period of time, the goal of the system to increase the number of full-time faculty on community college campuses.

Unfortunately, SB 373 is not the best way to achieve this goal. Due to funding constraints, SB 373 would serve to impede access to colleges. Districts rely on a mix of part-time and full-time tenure track faculty in order to properly balance student access with student success. This measure would hinder that balance and limit access to important courses in our local communities. Colleges will already be adding full-time faculty as a result of growth funding that was allocated in the last budget and would again add full-time faculty under the administration's most recent budget proposal.

The best way to go about addressing the important need for an increased number of full-time faculty on community college campuses is to fund the system budget request for a faculty block grant which would be dedicated to hiring those faculty.

Sincerely,



Mark MacDonald

CC: Members of the Senate Education Committee