

Date of Hearing: April 12, 2016

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Jose Medina, Chair

AB 2154 (Medina) – As Introduced February 17, 2016

SUBJECT: Student Aid Commission: student members

SUMMARY: Provides changes to the term and benefits to the student members of the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC). Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Provides that upon expiration of a student member of CSAC's two year term, if the Governor has not appointed a successor, the student member may remain in office for one additional year or until the Governor appoints a successor, whichever occurs first.
- 2) Provides that, in addition to the \$100 daily stipend for attending meetings, for a student member who attends a qualifying institution and is not the recipient of a Cal Grant award, the qualifying institution shall waive the student member's tuition, up to the maximum award amount for that institution, for the duration of the student member's term of office.

EXISTING LAW: Establishes CSAC, composed of 15 members, to administer California's student financial aid programs. Designates two student members, appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate, required to be enrolled in postsecondary educational institutions for the duration of the two year terms; a graduating student may serve for six months beyond graduation. The two students may not be enrolled in the same segment of higher education. The segments of higher education are designated as the University of California (UC), the California State University (CSU), the California Community Colleges (CCC), independent institutions (non-profit), and for-profit institutions. CSAC is responsible for determining the appropriate student organization for each segment, and each student organization is required to inform students within their respective segment of pending CSAC student member vacancies and each student organization is authorized to submit a list of three to five nominees for membership. A student member appointed to CSAC may not be in the same segment of the outgoing or the other sitting student member.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown.

COMMENTS: *Purpose of this bill.* According to the author, this bill aims to improve student representation on CSAC by providing a tuition waiver to the student commissioners for the duration of their term and affording the outgoing student commissioner the opportunity to remain on the board for up to one additional year if the Governor has yet to appoint a replacement.

Appointment gaps. This bill would allow an outgoing student member of CSAC to remain in office for up to one additional year if the Governor has not appointed a successor. According to the California State Student Association (CSSA), the sponsor of this bill, there have been times when the incoming student commissioner has not been appointed by the time their predecessor leaves, causing gaps in terms and leaving the board short a critical student vote. For example, the CSU student was selected for appointment in 2013 nearly seven months after the incumbent's term ended, delaying his time on the board and leaving a gap in student representation. In 2014, the private university student appointment was five months delayed. This provision is modeled on AB 2324 (Williams), Chapter 340, Statutes of 2014, which provided the faculty member of

the CSU Board of Trustees an additional two-year term if the Governor has not appointed a successor.

Tuition waiver. This bill would require an institution that participates in the Cal Grant Program to waive the tuition, up to the maximum Cal Grant award, for a student member of CSAC that is not a Cal Grant recipient. According to the sponsor, the California State Student Association (CSSA), student commissioners' work requires a great deal of time and commitment. CSSA notes, for the past several years, student commissioners have faced challenges trying to serve students on the commission while often, if not a Cal Grant recipient, also needing to work in order to pay for tuition. Currently, student commissioners do not receive any financial support for their role. This provision is modeled on SB 325 (Block), Chapter 175, Statutes of 2013, which required tuition to be waived for a student member of the CSU Board of Trustees.

Suggested amendment. Existing law provides that a graduating student may only continue to serve if his or her CSAC term expires within six months of the student's graduation. Moving forward, the author may wish to consider an amendment to establish a one-year exception to this requirement to coincide with the provisions of this bill.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

California State Student Association (Sponsor)
California State University

Opposition

None on File

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