

Date of Hearing: April 23, 2013

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION
Das Williams, Chair
AB 736 (Fox) – As Amended: April 15, 2013

SUBJECT: California State University: Antelope Valley Campus.

SUMMARY: Requires the Chancellor of the California State University (CSU) to conduct a study regarding the feasibility of establishing a CSU satellite program and independent campus in the Antelope Valley and requires the CSU Chancellor to complete and submit the study to the CSU Trustees within 18 months after the date that the Trustees have certified that sufficient non-state funds are available to conduct the study. Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Requires the Chancellor of the CSU to conduct a study regarding the feasibility of a CSU satellite program, and ultimately, an independent CSU campus in the Antelope Valley.
- 2) Provides that the study shall include:
 - a) Ten-year enrollment projections and physical capacity analysis;
 - b) Regional workforce needs;
 - c) Prospective economic impact and job creation in the region;
 - d) Infrastructure availability;
 - e) The potential alleviation of overcrowding and traffic at the Bakersfield and Northridge campuses;
 - f) Considerations of plausible alternatives;
 - g) Academic planning and program justification;
 - h) Description of proposed student services and student outreach programs;
 - i) Support and capital outlay budget projections;
 - j) Geographic and physical accessibility;
 - k) Environmental and social impact; and,
 - l) Effect on other institutions.
- 3) Provides that the feasibility study should be derived solely from non-state sources.
- 4) Specifies that the Chancellor shall complete and submit the study to the CSU Trustees within 18 months after the date the CSU Trustees certify sufficient non-state funds are available to conduct the study.

- 5) Requires that if the CSU Trustees determine there is a need for a new campus or satellite campus in the Antelope Valley, the Trustees shall conduct a formal study identical in content to the study of a proposed new postsecondary educational program that would have been conducted by the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC).
- 6) Defines "Antelope Valley" as the cities of California City, Lancaster; and Palmdale, and the United States Census Designated Places including but not limited to, Quartz Hill, Littlerock, Pearlblossom, Lake Los Angeles, Lake Hughes, Green Valley, Leona Valley, Wrightwood, North Edwards, Rosamond, Mojave, North Edwards, Boron, Piñon Hills, and Phelan.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Declares the intent of the Legislature that sites for new institutions or branches of the CSU shall not be authorized or acquired unless recommended by CPEC and that CPEC should advise the Legislature and the Governor regarding the need for, and location of, new institutions and campuses of public higher education (Education Code § 66900 and § 66904).
- 2) Establishes the CSU administered by the Board of Trustees, and provides that the Trustees shall have the full power over the construction and development of any CSU campus and any buildings or other facilities or improvements (EC § 89030, et seq.).

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown

COMMENTS: Need for the bill. According to the author's office many of the postsecondary students in the Antelope Valley are not able to travel to the neighboring CSU campuses to obtain their four-year degrees and thus not continuing their education due to lack of access to a public four-year institution in the community. The author contends that the closest CSU campuses to the Antelope Valley [CSU at Northridge (CSUN) and CSU at Bakersfield (CSUB)] are approximately one to two and half hours away by car and public transportation is only available for a commute to CSUN at \$26.00 round trip.

Background. According to the most recent U. S. Census Bureau data, Antelope Valley is one of the fastest growing regions in California with 85% growth in population in twenty years. A regional community initiative led by the Antelope Valley Board of Trade to obtain approval for a state polytechnic four-year university in the Antelope Valley was launched in 2008. According to a March 2013 report by the Antelope Valley Board of Trade, a new four-year university needs to be developed, from the existing CSUB, CSUN, CSU at Long Beach, and Cal Poly Pomona activities currently being conducted in the High Desert (also referred as the Antelope Valley) region of Southern California to address the need for engineers, medical, and other technical professionals. According to the report, a precedent has been set by technology testing in the High Desert, the abundance of technological industries, the physical attributes of the region, and the projected student population growth of the area more than justify the evolution of a much needed four-year public campus in the Antelope Valley.

According to the report, there are approximately 18,500 full-time equivalent students currently enrolled in postsecondary institutions in the Antelope Valley; approximately half of the students attend private for-profit and non-profit institutions. Additionally, the report found that student enrollments in engineering that feed the Antelope Valley Engineering Program (a pre-

engineering career pathway with partnerships with local high school districts and CSUB and CSU at Fresno) are increasing at both Antelope Valley College and at Cerro Coso Community College, but due to budget short falls these campuses have not been able to add much needed additional class sections to accommodate the growth increases.

The California State University at Bakersfield - Antelope Valley Regional Center (CSUB-AV). CSUB-AV opened in 2000 on the campus of Antelope Valley College and is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. However, CSUB-AV currently offers only eight undergraduate degrees and five graduate degrees. Most of the degrees presently offered do not appear to align with the workforce demands in the Antelope Valley.

CPEC. There is currently no coordinating entity for higher education in California. Existing law establishes CPEC to be responsible for coordinating public, independent, and private postsecondary education in California and to provide independent policy analyses and recommendations to the Legislature and the Governor on postsecondary education issues. However, CPEC's budget and responsibilities were reduced over time, casting doubt on its effectiveness and triggering calls for its restructuring. The Budget Act of 2011 deleted funding and personnel from CPEC and asked the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) to make recommendations on the structure and duties of a statewide higher education coordinating body for California. CPEC shut down in Fall 2011, transferring its federal Teacher Quality Improvement grant program to the California Department of Education and extensive data resources to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.

Previous legislation. AB 24 (Block, 2009), which was vetoed by Governor Schwarzenegger, proposed a study regarding the feasibility of establishing a CSU satellite program and campus at Chula Vista. AB 500 (Conway, 2009), which died in the Higher Education Committee, was virtually identical to this measure except called for a CSU campus in the high desert. SCR 92 (Peace), Resolution Chapter 104, Statutes of 1998, resolved that the Legislature endorse a proposed City site for possible future use as a UC campus.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

None on file.

Opposition

None on file.

Analysis Prepared by: Jeanice Warden / HIGHER ED. / (916) 319-3960