

Date of Hearing: April 9, 2024

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Mike Fong, Chair

AB 2707 (Mike Fong) – As Amended April 1, 2024

SUBJECT: Community colleges: student housing: study.

SUMMARY: Requires the Legislative Analyst’s Office (LAO) to conduct a study evaluating the demographics and unique issues and barriers that housing insecure California Community Colleges (CCC) students and older students with dependents, as defined, face in securing housing. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires the LAO to conduct a study evaluating the demographics and unique issues and barriers that housing-insecure CCC students 25 years of age and older and students with dependents face in securing housing.
- 2) Requires that the LAO submit a report to the Legislature, on or before January 1, 2026, with the results of the study, as enumerated in (1) above.
- 3) Requires that the report must include, but not be limited to, all of the following:
 - a) Policy recommendations and options that would alleviate issues and barriers, such as family-style or intersegmental housing;
 - b) The availability, cost, and difficulty in securing on-campus and off-campus housing suitable for students, including challenges such as discrimination, income, or other financial and legal issues;
 - c) The distance and cost of travel for students who commute;
 - d) The total number and prevalence of vacancies in on-campus housing suitable for students and reasons for those vacancies;
 - e) The prevalence of homelessness, temporary living, and unstable occupancy;
 - f) The availability of on-campus childcare and the number of students who use on-campus childcare;
 - g) The number of students served in on-campus housing, housing provided pursuant to a third-party campus partnership, or housing provided pursuant to an emergency grant;
 - h) Whether the current residents of on-campus housing units are representative of the students included in the study relative to the total student body of that campus;
 - i) The availability of campus resources for emergency or rapid rehousing;
 - j) Nonfinancial barriers that campuses face in providing housing for students; and,

- k) Housing stability issues experienced by former community college students resulting from transferring between educational institutions.
- 4) Requests that, to the extent possible, the data in the report be disaggregated by, but not limited to, all of the following:
- a) Age;
 - b) Parenting status;
 - c) First-generation college student status;
 - d) Disability status;
 - e) Current or former foster care status;
 - f) Veteran status;
 - g) Currently or formerly incarcerated; and,
 - h) Immigration status.
- 5) Defines “dependent” as an individual for whom the student provided over one-half of the individual’s support during the prior calendar year.
- 6) Sunsets the provisions of this measure on January 1, 2027.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes the mission and function of the CCC, which, in part is to: 1) offer academic and vocational instruction at the lower division level for both younger and older students, including those persons returning to school; 2) authorizes the CCC to grant the associate in arts and the associate in science degrees; 3) requires the CCC to offer English as a Second Language instruction, adult noncredit instruction, and support services which help students succeed at the postsecondary level; and, 4) advance California’s economic growth and global competitiveness through education, training, and services that contribute to continuous work force improvement (Education Code (EC) Section 66010.4).
- 2) Establishes the Higher Education Student Housing Grant Program is to provide one-time grants for the construction of student housing, or for the acquisition and renovation of commercial properties into student housing for the purpose of providing affordable, low-cost housing options for students enrolled in public postsecondary education in California (EC Section 17201).
- 3) Requires the CCC Office of the Chancellor to collect data, as specified, on student housing insecurity at each CCC campus and submit a report on that data to the Department of Finance and all relevant policy committees on or before March 1, 2023 (EC Section 17203.5).

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown. This measure has been keyed non-fiscal by the Office of the Legislative Counsel.

COMMENTS: *Purpose of the Measure.* According to the author, “California’s Community Colleges serve the greatest number of students and offer the greatest potential to transform lives through career technical education and transfer. Its student population has evolved to include more adults and student parents.”

The author contends that, “we must adapt to our students’ needs, especially as we become aware of the effects of housing insecurity on student success. If we do not have a clear picture of these issues and its effects on these students, we cannot develop proper policies or allocate resources to support their success - which is California’s success.”

Further, the author states that, “it is imperative that we address housing insecurity for nontraditional and student parents in a data driven and clear-sighted manner with a targeted study.”

The author states that this measure, “seeks to illuminate housing insecurity and homelessness among our students, which disproportionately affects minorities. It affects inequities in student success, as student parents have worse academic outcomes than traditional students. Community colleges provide incredible opportunity to address economic achievement gaps; the power of education to increase economic security and uplift underserved populations is well recognized. By studying housing insecurity among nontraditional community college students and informing the development of student housing policy, this bill will allow the State to better help eliminate inequities experienced by students over the age of 25 and students with dependents.”

Student parents. A California Competes study released in February 2021, entitled *Untapped Opportunity: Understanding and Advancing Prospects for Californians without a College Degree*, found that California is home to approximately 3,900,000 residents with dependent children who lack a college degree, making it difficult to earn a family-sustaining wage.

California Competes also found in their analysis of the American Community Survey data from 2017 to 2021 and National Postsecondary Student Aid Study administrative collection data from 2020 that California is home to approximately 300,000 undergraduate student parents, 61% of which are first-generation college students and 72% are students of color.¹ [Since this particular report was released, according to California Competes, California is now home to approximately 400,000 student parents.]

Student Housing Grant Program. As part of the 2021-22 California Budget package, the Postsecondary Education Trailer Bill established the Higher Education Student Housing and Capacity Expansion Grant Program. The CCC refer to the Higher Education Student Housing program as the Affordable Student Housing Grant Program. This Program provides the CCC with an opportunity to apply for student housing grants over a three-year period with three rounds of grant awards.

¹ National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). (2023). [[Data set](#)]. 2019–20 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study Administrative Collection (NPSAS:20-AC) [[Data set](#)].

The LAO. LAO has provided fiscal and policy advice to the Legislature since 1941 (83 years). The LAO is known for its fiscal and programmatic expertise and nonpartisan analyses of the state budget. The LAO serves as the "eyes and ears" for the Legislature to ensure that the executive branch is implementing legislative policy in a cost efficient and effective manner.

Historically, one of the most important responsibilities of the LAO has been to analyze the annual Governor's Budget. In recent years, the LAO has presented a series of analyses from the beginning to the end of the budget process on overarching fiscal issues as well as specific departmental budget proposals and offered its recommendations for legislative action. In order to provide the Legislature with timely advice on these matters, the LAO has published its budget comments and advice in the form of separate written reports, handouts for hearings, and entries in an online list. These documents help set the agenda for the work of the Legislature's fiscal committees in developing a state budget. Staff of the LAO work with these Committees throughout the budget process and provide public testimony on the office's recommendations.

More generally, the LAO is a staff resource to all Legislators. The LAO also performs the following functions:

- 1) *Budget "Control."* The LAO reviews requests by the administration to make changes to the budget *after* it is enacted. These reviews are used primarily by members of the fiscal committees.
- 2) *Special Reports.* Throughout the year, the LAO prepares special reports on the state budget and topics of interest to the Legislature.
- 3) *Initiatives and Ballot Measures.* The LAO estimates the fiscal effect on state and local government of all proposed initiatives (prior to circulation) and prepares analyses of all measures that qualify for the statewide ballot.
- 4) *Forecasting.* The LAO forecasts the state revenues and expenditures.

Arguments in support. According to the Faculty Association of California Community Colleges (FACCC), sponsors of this measure, "students with dependents experience significant barriers to accessing housing, which impacts two generations." According to FACCC, "70% of students with dependents are housing insecure, and 26% experience homelessness. There is a need for varied student housing arrangements that are suitable for accommodating the lifestyles of diverse students. However, recent student housing funding, including the Student Housing Grant Program, gives priority to housing models that do not accommodate older students and student parents, inadvertently excluding this disproportionately-impacted student population."

Lastly, FACCC contends that, "as the Legislature has encouraged the development of student housing on community college campuses in recent legislative sessions, it is timely to conduct the necessary research to ensure that nontraditional students do not fall through the cracks. It is of the utmost importance that housing projects are inclusive and accessible to all students— and that requires understanding what our diverse body of students need."

Related legislation. AB 2458 (Berman), which was approved by this Committee on April 2, 2024, with a vote of 11 – 0, among other things, requires higher education institutions to uniformly collect and report data on student parents.

Prior legislation. AB 183 (Ting), Chapter 54, Statutes of 2022, requests higher education segments to collect data on housing insecurity and submit a report, as specified, on or before March 2023.

AB 2341 (McCarty), introduced in 2020, which was held in the Senate Committee on Education, would have authorized the CCC to establish a program to support justice-involved students and provide, among other things, housing assistance.

AB 2353 (McCarty), introduced in 2020, which was held in this Committee, would have established a program to be administered by the California School Finance Authority to provide grants to CCC that are exploring building affordable student rental housing.

SB 307 (Nguyen), introduced in 2017, which was held on the Suspense File in the Assembly Committee on Appropriations, would have created a task force to study the extent, causes, and effects of housing insecurity in postsecondary students.

AB 2748 (Jones), introduced in 2006, which was vetoed by the Governor, would have required the California State University and requested the University of California, to report to the Legislature, on various aspects of on-campus student housing, by March 31, 2007.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Community College League of California
Faculty Association of California Community Colleges (Sponsor)
PowerCA Action
Student Senate for California Community Colleges

Opposition

None on file.

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