

The Honorable Mike Fong, Chair
Assembly Higher Education Committee
1021 O Street, Room 6740
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chair Fong and Committee Members:

My name is Alicia Hernandez and I'm a student at UC DAVIS, and I am submitting a comment to the Assembly Higher Education Committee to express my deep concerns with the University of California in their handling of campus and systemwide programs and initiatives as a response to the federal Trump administration demands to colleges and universities across the country.

From removing diversity statements in faculty hiring and eliminating race and ethnicity from program names and campus organization missions, to threatening student government autonomy and firing or cancelling contracts of our equity program staff, I am extremely disappointed and profoundly disturbed by the University's actions and our campuses' capitulation despite the UC not entering into any agreement with the Trump administration whatsoever.

The State Legislature must hold UC accountable and urge them to engage in transparency and open dialogue with student-leaders, faculty and staff representatives, and state policymakers in order to meet this moment. This would include standing meetings with representatives from official student organizations like UCSA, UCGPC and the Council of Presidents, as well as stronger shared governance practices with campus student and faculty leadership associations.

By adopting strong guardrails for how UC's engage with the federal government, as well as offering guidelines for what protections or resources our institutions must offer students should the UC engage in meeting federal demands, California must continue to set a strong standard for UC and all of our colleges to put student safety over institutional complacency.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Best regards,
Alicia, UC DAVIS

November 14, 2025

The Honorable Mike Fong, Chair
Assembly Higher Education Committee
1021 O Street, Room 6740
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chair Fong and Committee Members,

My name is Candice Phan and I am a third-year undergraduate student at UC Davis. I am submitting this comment to the committee to express my deep concerns with the UC's handling of campus and systemwide affairs as a response to the Trump administration's demands to higher education institutions across the country.

While I understand the complicated position the UC is in and empathize with the individuals who have been working tirelessly to navigate this precarious situation, I stand firm in saying that I am deeply disturbed by the University's recent actions. Students are seeing in real time threats towards student government autonomy (e.g., suspension of the UC Davis Law Student Association), the cancellation of equity program staff contracts, the pulling of diversity statements in faculty hiring, and the removal of race and ethnicity from program names. It is profoundly alarming that these actions were made despite the UC having no formal agreement with the Trump administration, and it is deeply disheartening that they were made without the consultation of students and student-leaders. I believe that it has been the UC's lack of transparent communication with student leaders, faculty representatives, and program staff that has led to individuals making some of these changes on their own out of fear, and therefore I believe systemwide leaders have a responsibility to send a strong and unified message to all campuses and the federal administration that the UC does in fact stand by its values and will not cave to external pressures. Without clear communication on this front, the UC will likely be subject to even more egregious demands from the federal government, and individuals at the campus-level will continue to feel an uneasiness that is muddying their ability to carry out the essential work that students rely on in order to thrive in their academic journey.

I respectfully urge the State Legislature to hold the UC accountable by urging them to engage in more transparent dialogue and stronger shared governance practices with student-leaders and faculty/staff representatives (i.e., standing meetings with UCSA, UCGPC, the Council of Presidents, Faculty Associations, Basic Needs Centers). I also urge the State to continue seeking creative ways to ensure fully-funded resources for students, faculty, and staff amid federal cuts to SNAP, Medicare, MSI funding, and research funding. California must continue to set a strong standard for the UC and the nation in putting student needs over political pressure and institutional complacency.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. California students are counting on you.

Sincerely,
Candice Phan, UC Davis

November 14, 2025



Re.: Public Comment on UC Response to Federal Directives – ASUCR Submission.

Dear Chair Fong and Members of the Assembly Higher Education Committee,

My name is Joseph Anastacio, and I serve as the Legislative Director for the Associated Students of UC Riverside (ASUCR) Office of External Affairs. This public comment aims to express UC Riverside students' deep concerns regarding the University of California's recent actions in response to pressures from the federal Trump administration. Students are alarmed by the extent to which the UC has altered equity- and inclusion-related programs despite having no formal agreement with the federal government.

Across the UC system, students are experiencing the consequences of these decisions: removal of diversity statements in faculty hiring, renaming cultural programs to omit race and ethnicity, undermining student government autonomy, and the termination or silencing of equity program staff. These changes destabilize essential support structures and directly threaten the wellbeing of low-income, first-generation, undocumented, LGBTQ+, and students of color. As student leadership, we are deeply troubled that these decisions were made proactively and without meaningful consultation with the students, staff, and faculty most affected.

California has a responsibility to uphold equity, transparency, and student safety in public higher education. On behalf of the ASUCR Office of External Affairs, I respectfully urge the Legislature to:

- Require transparent consultation from the UC Office of the President with UCSA, UCGPC, and campus student governments before changes to equity-related programs occur to avoid anticipatory compliance.
- Establish guardrails limiting UC compliance with federal demands that conflict with California civil rights protections.
- Increase oversight of campus-level equity infrastructure, including justification for program changes that affect marginalized or underrepresented communities.
- Ensure strong protections and resources for faculty, staff, and especially students amid federal cuts to SNAP, Medicare, and research funding.
- Strengthen shared governance to ensure student voices cannot be bypassed in decisions that materially affect our communities.

California must continue leading the nation by protecting inclusive higher education and ensuring that student wellbeing is never compromised in anticipation of political pressure.

Thank you for your time and continued commitment to California students.

Sincerely,

Joseph Anastacio

Legislative Director, Associated Students of UC Riverside

cc Briana Trujillo, ASUCR VP of External Affairs | Aditi Hariharan, UC Student Association President
Luis Lopez Arias, ASUCR State Relations Director | Candice Phan, UCSA Gov. Relations Chair

The Honorable Mike Fong, Chair
Assembly Higher Education Committee
1021 O Street, Room 6740
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chair Fong and Committee Members:

My name is Jasmine Khdlaryan and I'm a student at UC Davis, and I am submitting a comment to the Assembly Higher Education Committee to express my deep concerns with the University of California in their handling of campus and systemwide programs and initiatives as a response to the federal Trump administration demands to colleges and universities across the country.

From removing diversity statements in faculty hiring and eliminating race and ethnicity from program names and campus organization missions, to threatening student government autonomy and firing or cancelling contracts of our equity program staff, I am extremely disappointed and profoundly disturbed by the University's actions and our campuses' capitulation despite the UC not entering into any agreement with the Trump administration whatsoever.

Not only that, but as a CalFresh recipient, I was personally affected by the federal government shutdown. Due to the shutdown, my benefits were delayed and I experienced food insecurity. I utilize basic needs resources on campus such as the Pantry and the AggieEats Food Truck, but I know that they are overworked, understaffed, and need more support.

The State Legislature must hold UC accountable and urge them to engage in transparency and open dialogue with student-leaders, faculty and staff representatives, and state policymakers in order to meet this moment. This would include standing meetings with representatives from official student organizations like UCSA, UCGPC and the Council of Presidents, as well as stronger shared governance practices with campus student and faculty leadership associations.

By adopting strong guardrails for how UC's engage with the federal government, as well as offering guidelines for what protections or resources our institutions must offer students should the UC engage in meeting federal demands, California must continue to set a strong standard for UC and all of our colleges to put student safety over institutional complacency.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Dear Chair Fong and Committee Members:

My name is Sheryl Samala, and I'm a student at UCLA. I am submitting a comment to the Assembly Higher Education Committee to express my deep concerns with the University of California in their handling of campus and systemwide programs and initiatives as a response to the federal Trump administration's demands to colleges and universities across the country.

From removing diversity statements in faculty hiring and eliminating race and ethnicity from program names and campus organization missions, to threatening student government autonomy and firing or cancelling contracts of our equity program staff, I am extremely disappointed and profoundly disturbed by the University's actions and our campuses' capitulation despite the UC not entering into any agreement with the Trump administration whatsoever.

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Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Best regards,
Sheryl Samala, UCLA

My name is Ethan Victor and I'm a student at UC Davis, and I am submitting a comment to the Assembly Higher Education Committee to express my deep concerns with the University of California in their handling of campus and systemwide programs and initiatives as a response to the federal Trump administration demands to colleges and universities across the country.

From removing diversity statements in faculty hiring and eliminating race and ethnicity from program names and campus organization missions, to threatening student government autonomy and firing or cancelling contracts of our equity program staff, I am extremely disappointed and profoundly disturbed by the University's actions and our campuses' capitulation despite the UC not entering into any agreement with the Trump administration whatsoever.

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Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Best regards,
Ethan Victor
UC Davis



ABC
Alliance for a
Better Community



**CALIFORNIA
COMPETES**

HIGHER EDUCATION FOR A STRONG ECONOMY

November 13, 2025

Chair Mike Fong
Assembly Higher Education Committee
1020 N Street, Room 173
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Protecting Student Food Security and Supporting State Solutions to Expand CalFresh Access

Dear Chair Fong and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations committed to advancing college access, student success, and equitable economic opportunity, we write to express concern about the potential impact of the federal *H.R. 1* proposal on California students and families. We also urge your continued leadership in advancing state-level solutions that protect access to CalFresh for college students through measures such as:

- Expanding the state definition of a "Local Program that Improves Employability" to qualify all students enrolled at least half-time in any program of study at a 2- or 4-year public institution through the CalFresh exemption process.
- Establishing the legal, data, and consent infrastructure within the California Department of Social Services to allow for program-specific data-sharing among higher education segments, college campuses, and county human services agencies for public benefit outreach and maintenance for California students.

Nearly [one in seven](#) Californians depends on the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), known as CalFresh in California, to help pay for food. Among them are an estimated 414,000 [college students](#) across the California Community Colleges (CCC), California State University (CSU), and University of California (UC) systems who participated in CalFresh during the 2022–23 academic year. Yet despite this critical support, [half of California's college students](#) experience food insecurity, often balancing coursework, employment, and caregiving responsibilities while struggling to meet their most basic needs.

The Impact of H.R. 1

The federal *H.R. 1* proposal includes deep cuts and structural changes to SNAP that would reduce benefits and restrict eligibility, with an estimated [\\$300 billion in cuts over the next decade](#). These reductions would disproportionately affect low-income students and families and shift significant program costs to states. Such cost shifts could force California

to [scale back CalFresh outreach and benefits](#), potentially [straining state budgets and limiting discretionary funds](#) that support higher education systems, including the UC and CSU.

The Broader Context

Under current federal leadership, the risk of ongoing cuts or suspensions to SNAP benefits remains high, threatening the well-being of [5.5 million Californians](#). College students face compounded barriers: outdated and restrictive eligibility rules, limited housing and child care assistance, and the expiration of critical relief programs like the Student Loan Payment Pause and expanded SNAP benefits. These challenges place students' health, academic progress, and long-term economic mobility at risk.

A State Solution:

We encourage renewed collaboration among the Legislature, the California Department of Social Services, and higher education partners to refine and advance solutions that balance privacy safeguards with urgent student needs.

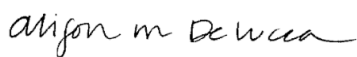
Conclusion

The combined impact of federal cuts and limited state infrastructure threatens to widen equity gaps in higher education. We urge California's leadership to reaffirm its commitment to college students basic needs by:

- Opposing federal efforts to reduce or restrict access to SNAP benefits;
- Ensuring students are appropriately identified for exemptions and not subject to the Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents work requirements; and,
- Advancing state strategies that strengthen CalFresh enrollment and outreach to eligible students.

Together, we can ensure that every student in California has access to the nutrition needed to learn, thrive, and complete their education.

Sincerely,



Alison De Lucca
Executive Director
Southern California College
Attainment Network



Su Jin Jez, PhD
CEO, California Competes:
Higher Education for a
Strong Economy



Vanessa Aramayo
CEO & President
Alliance for a Better
Community

Cc:

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
The Honorable Members of the California Assembly and Senate Budget Committees
The Honorable Members of the California Assembly Higher Education Committee
Nichole Muñoz-Murillo, Chief Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Governor Newsom
Kim Johnson, Secretary, California Health & Human Services Agency

Jennifer Troia, Director, California Department of Social Services
Dr. Daisy Gonzales, Executive Director, California Student Aid Commission
James B. Milliken, President, University of California
Dr. Mildred García, Chancellor, California State University
Sonya Christian, Chancellor, California Community Colleges
Joe Stephenshaw, Director of Budget, Department of Finance
Erika Li, Chief Deputy Director, Budgets, Department of Finance
Nick Maduros, California Government Operations Agency, State of California
Dee Dee Myers, California Office of Business and Economic Development, State of California
Stewart Knox, California Labor and Workforce Development Agency, State of California
Jessica Holmes, Program Budget Manager, Education Systems, Office of Governor Newsom
Carlos Marquez III, Executive Director, County Welfare Directors Association
Christian Griffith, Chief Consultant
Nicole Vazquez, Deputy Chief Consultant
Jeanice Warden, Chief Consultant
Ellen Cesaretti-Monroy, Senior Consultant
Lynn Lorber, Chief Consultant
Olgalilia Ramirez, Principal Consultant
Jennifer Pacella, Deputy Legislative Analyst, Legislative Analyst's Office
Lisa Qing, Principal Fiscal & Policy Analyst, Legislative Analyst's Office
Andrew Medina, Policy Consultant, Office of the Senate pro Tempore
Mónica Henestroza, Special Assistant, Office of the Assembly Speaker
Jason Sisney, Budget Advisor, Office of the Assembly Speaker
Elisa Wynne, Staff Director, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
Mark Martin, Consultant, Assembly Committee on Budget
Diego Lopez, Principal Consultant, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
Yong Salas, Consultant, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
Sarah Haynes, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus
Brent Finkel, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus
Heath Flora, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus
Kirk Feely, Senate Republican Consultant
Anthony Archie, Senate Republican Consultant
Chantele Denny, Senate Republican Consultant
Megan De Sousa, Senate Republican Consultant

The Honorable Mike Fong, Chair
Assembly Higher Education Committee
1021 O Street, Room 6740
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Chair Fong and Committee Members:

My name is Javier Nuñez-Verdugo and I'm a student at UCLA and I am submitting a comment to the Assembly Higher Education Committee to express my deep concerns with the University of California in their handling of campus and systemwide programs and initiatives as a response to the federal Trump administration demands to colleges and universities across the country.

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Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Best regards,
Javier Nuñez-Verdugo
UC Los Angeles
Vice Chair of the UC Students Association