

Date of Hearing: June 23, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Mike Fong, Chair

SB 960 (Cabaldon) – As Amended April 22, 2026

**SENATE VOTE:** 37-0

**SUBJECT:** Public postsecondary education: community colleges: statewide baccalaureate degree program

**SUMMARY:** Modifies the prohibition on California Community College (CCC) baccalaureate degree programs duplicating California State University (CSU) programs by limiting that prohibition to CSU programs offered within the local admission service area of the community college district (CCD), and creates an exception, beginning July 1, 2030, allowing duplication of a CSU program that has been designated as "impacted" for at least three consecutive years. Retains the existing statewide prohibition on duplication of University of California (UC) programs. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Limits the prohibition on CCC duplication of CSU baccalaureate degree programs to instances where a CSU campus's local service area includes or overlaps with the CCC district's territory, except:
  - a) Beginning July 1, 2030, when the CSU program has been impacted for at least three consecutive years prior to the date the program is approved.
- 2) Provides that before July 1, 2030, a CSU campus that wants to discontinue impaction of a baccalaureate degree program must develop a plan describing how the campus will address enrollment demand and maintain student access for that program. The bill requires the plan to be made publicly available on the campus website.
- 3) Allows a CCD to duplicate a CSU program where a CSU campus's local admission area does not include or overlap with the CCC district's territory.
- 4) Authorizes a CCD to continue to offer a CCC baccalaureate degree program approved under impaction-based duplication regardless of any subsequent change in impaction status of the corresponding CSU program.
- 5) Retains the prohibition on CCC baccalaureate degree program duplication of UC programs statewide.
- 6) Reduces the total number of baccalaureate degree programs offered by a CCD from 25% to 15% of the total number of associate degree programs offered by the CCD.
- 7) Defines the following terms:
  - a) Impacted programs to mean a specific baccalaureate degree program offered by a campus of the CSU that has been designated as impacted by the California State University in accordance with its established policies and procedures and for which the number of

eligible applications received in the initial filing period is greater than the number that can be accommodated by the program; and,

- b) “Local service area” has the same meaning as citing in existing law to mean the CSU service area for the campus as set forth in the CSU Coded Memorandum AA-2005-05, dated February 23, 2005, or as subsequently amended.

#### **EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Differentiates the missions and functions of public and independent institutions of higher education. Under these provisions:
  - a) The primary mission of the CSU is to offer undergraduate and graduate instruction through the master’s degree in the liberal arts and sciences and professional education including teacher education. The CSU is authorized to establish two-year programs only when mutually agreed upon by the Trustees and the CCC Board of Governors (BOG). The CSU is also authorized to jointly award the doctoral degree with the UC and with one or more independent institutions of higher education;
  - b) The UC is authorized to provide undergraduate and graduate instruction and has exclusive jurisdiction in public higher education over graduate instruction in the professions of law, medicine, dentistry and veterinary medicine. The UC is also the primary state-supported academic agency for research;
  - c) The independent institutions of higher education are required to provide undergraduate and graduate instruction and research in accordance with their respective missions; and,
  - d) The mission and function of the CCC is the offering of academic and vocational instruction at the lower division level, and the CCC are authorized to grant the Associate in Arts and the Associate in Science degrees. The community colleges are also required to offer learning supports to close learning gaps, English as a Second Language instruction, and adult noncredit instruction, and support services which help students succeed at the postsecondary level. (Education Code (EDC) Section 66010.4)
- 2) Authorizes the BOG of the CCC to establish permanent district baccalaureate degree programs, and provided that only 15 baccalaureate degree programs are approved during each application period allowing for a total of 30 baccalaureate degree programs per academic year. Additionally, existing law:
  - a) Specifies that CCDs, as part of the baccalaureate degree program, will have the additional mission to provide high-quality undergraduate education at an affordable price for students and the state;
  - b) Requires the Chancellor of the CCC to consult with and seek feedback from the Chancellor of the CSU, the President of the University of California (UC), and the President of the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU) on proposed baccalaureate degree programs, as specified, and establishes a mechanism for the assessment, consultation, and approval of programs where duplication is identified, as specified;

- c) Requires a CCD to continue to offer an associate degree program in the same academic subject for which baccalaureate degree program has been approved, unless the CCD has received approval from the CCC Chancellor to eliminate the associate degree program, and requires the CCC Chancellor to evaluate both changes to the labor market viability of an associate degree and changes to the minimum education required to maintain program accreditation when making a decision to authorize the elimination of an associate degree program; and,
  - d) Specifies that the total number of baccalaureate degree programs offered by a CCD, at any time, does not exceed 25% of the total number of associate degree programs offered by the CCD, including associate degrees for transfer. (EDC Section 78040, *et seq.*)
- 3) Requires the CSU Trustees to ensure that any changes in the admission criteria for campus admission comply with specified consultation, public meeting, notification and disclosure requirements, and prohibits any change from becoming effective until one year has elapsed, or six months, if the change is based upon the resources of the local service area of the affected campus. Applies these requirements to all changes in the admission criteria that affect eligibility of local service area applicants, including changes to transfer requirements and determinations regarding impact of majors. (EDC Section 89030.5)

**FISCAL EFFECT:** According to the Senate Committee on Appropriations:

- 1) The CCC Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) does not anticipate additional Proposition 98 General Fund costs as a result of this measure. While the bill may lead to an overall increase in the number of new baccalaureate degree programs, it would not increase per-student costs as existing statute ties baccalaureate degree program funding to the current community college marginal cost rate for a full-time equivalent student. Additionally, the Chancellor's Office indicates that CCDs must demonstrate full financial and operational capacity, including staffing, student supports, and long-term sustainability, before receiving authorization to offer a baccalaureate degree program.
- 2) The Chancellor's Office estimates one-time General Fund workload costs of between \$13,000 and \$59,000 to update the district application for the baccalaureate degree program, issue guidance, and provide technical assistance.
- 3) The CSU indicates that depending on the number of new community college baccalaureate programs that are authorized as a result of this bill, it could impact enrollment across campuses and pose significant cost pressures on the CSU.

**COMMENTS:** *Purpose.* According to the author, "SB 960 is a student-centered policy that allows a California Community College to offer a bachelor's degree in a high-demand field when the regional [CSU] has been impacted in that same program for three consecutive years or if the program is not offered by the regional CSU."

The author continues, writing that "...when CSU programs are consistently over-enrolled and turning qualified students away, California cannot afford to let workforce pipelines stall. SB 960 provides a student and workforce focused approach to allowing some community colleges to offer a bachelor's degree. This bill removes an outdated barrier that prioritizes institutional

boundaries over students' futures. By expanding affordable, local access to bachelor's degrees in critical technical fields, SB 960 strengthens California's workforce, fuels economic growth, and ensures students are not denied opportunity simply because a program is full."

*Master Plan for Higher Education.* As outlined in the Master Plan for Higher Education and by state statute, the CCCs are designated to have an open admission policy and bear the most extensive responsibility for lower-division undergraduate instruction. The three primary areas of the CCCs mission include education leading to associates degrees and university transfer, career technical education, and basic skills. The primary mission of the CSU is undergraduate and graduate instruction through the master's degree. The UC was granted the sole authority to independently offer doctoral degrees.

Notwithstanding the differentiation of the mission envisioned by the Master Plan, as outlined in statute, the Legislature authorized the CSU to go beyond its original mission to offer six professional doctoral degrees which: the Doctor of Audiology (Au.D), Doctor of Education (Ed.D), Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT), Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP), Doctor of Occupational Therapy (OTD), and Doctor of Public Health (Dr.PH). Each program was individually approved through legislation. Fees were capped at the rate charged at the UC, no additional funding was provided by the state, and these programs were to be implemented without diminishing or reducing enrollment in undergraduate programs. Additionally, the CSU programs that offer applied doctorates were not duplicative of degrees offered by UC.

*Parallel expansion.* SB 850 (Block), Chapter 747, Statutes of 2014, authorized the CCC BOG, in consultation with the CSU and the UC, to establish a baccalaureate degree pilot program. The pilot program allowed up to 15 participating CCDs to offer one baccalaureate degree program each to meet local workforce needs as long as it was not duplicating a baccalaureate degree program already offered by the CSU or the UC. The Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) conducted interim and final evaluations of the pilot program.

AB 927 (Medina and Choi), Chapter 565, Statutes of 2021 made the original pilot program (SB 850 (Block) Chapter 747, Statutes of 2014 permanent, perpetually approving the original pilot programs and authorizing as many as 30 new baccalaureate degrees per year. AB 656 (McCarty), Chapter 663, Statutes of 2023, authorizes the CSU to award professional or applied doctoral degrees statewide that do not duplicate UC doctoral degrees and satisfy certain requirements.

*CCC Baccalaureate Degree Program.* The CCC Baccalaureate Degree Program was established to allow CCDs to offer four-year degrees in subject areas with documented unmet workforce needs that are not duplicated by existing CSU or UC programs. As of the most recent data available from the CCCCO, 45 colleges have received approval to offer baccalaureate programs, with a combined total of 60 approved programs statewide. The most common program areas are Respiratory Care or Therapy, offered at 11 colleges, followed by Dental Hygiene at 8 colleges and Biomanufacturing at 6 colleges — reflecting the program's emphasis on allied health and technical workforce training. Southern California has the highest concentration of approved programs, accounting for approximately 40 percent of all approvals, while rural and North State colleges represent the smallest share but some of the most regionally distinctive offerings. The program operates under a structured, merit-based approval process that evaluates workforce need, program quality, institutional capacity, and non-duplication of UC and CSU offerings before any authorization is granted.

Regarding the approval timeline, CCDs may submit applications on one of two cycles annually — by January 15 for a May 31 decision, or by August 15 for a December 31 decision — with the Chancellor's Office conducting a minimum 30-day review of each completed application. No more than 15 programs may be approved in any single application period, for a maximum of 30 new approvals per academic year, and a district's total baccalaureate offerings may not exceed 25 percent of its associate degree programs at any time.

The CCC Baccalaureate Degree Program operates within a system whose primary statutory mission, under EDC Section 66010.4, is the offering of lower-division academic and vocational instruction, including transfer to four-year institutions. Recent data from EdSource indicates that of CCC students who began their studies in the 2019-20 academic year, approximately 18% had transferred to a four-year postsecondary institution within four years. In 2025, 68,600 community college students transferred to a UC or CSU campus, with 71.8% transferring to CSU. The number of CCC students transferring to UC and CSU declined by 6.9% between 2021 and 2025 — representing 5,057 fewer transfer students system-wide. These figures provide important context for how the CCC system is performing against the transfer and completion elements of its statutory mission, even as it expands into baccalaureate degree authority.

*Tension over duplication.* The tension between the CCC and the CSU over baccalaureate program duplication has been well-documented in recent years. Disagreement over what constitutes duplication has left more than a dozen proposed programs in limbo since, with the two systems holding fundamentally different views on whether geographic distance between institutions is a relevant factor in the duplication analysis.

CSU has raised concerns — reflected in resolutions by the CSU Academic Senate and statements from the CSU Chancellor's Office — about both the philosophical boundaries established by the 1960 Master Plan and the potential enrollment and funding impacts of expanding community college baccalaureate offerings. The dispute recently reached an inflection point in February 2026, when the CCC Chancellor's Office approved three programs over CSU's objections — at Mesa College, Moorpark College, and Southwestern College — a decision reported by EdSource that followed years of deliberations and a WestEd analysis commissioned by the community college system examining CSU's duplication claims against 16 pending proposals.

*Higher education coordination.* All of California's public education institutions share a commitment to work together to ensure that parts of the system work for all Californians. Since the defunding of the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) in 2011, California has not had a statewide coordinating entity for higher education. Prior to its demise, the role of CPEC included academic program review to coordinate the long-range planning of the state's public higher education systems as a means to ensure that the segments were working together to carry out their individual missions while serving the state's long-range workforce and economic needs.

The absence of a higher education coordinating entity has hindered the state's ability to review degree programs to ensure alignment with state and workforce needs. In its place, changes to higher education's blueprint are being made one legislative proposal at a time in a piecemeal way, which has arguably resulted in an uncoordinated and fragmented system.

In 2025 the Governor signed AB 1098 (Fong & Padilla), Chapter 446, Statutes of 2025, establishing the California Education Interagency Council (Council) within the Government

Operations Agency to align education and workforce systems, support adult skill development, and address the changing nature of work and the economy. The language of AB 1098 (Fong & Padilla) specifically states that the Council was created to increase “collaboration across postsecondary education” and to be a “a forum for communication to discuss the impacts of proposed intersegmental and cross-sector issues.” The Council will hold its first meeting on June 25, 2026, and is still in the process of hiring staff.

*Impaction.* This bill provides an exception to the local restriction, allowing a CCC district to offer the same baccalaureate degree program only if that CSU program has been impacted for three consecutive years. An undergraduate major, program, or campus is designated as “impacted” (subject to approval by the CSU Chancellor) when it receives more eligible applicants during the initial filing period than it can accommodate given its instructional resources and physical capacity. Impaction may be defined by a specific program or by the entering class level (i.e., freshmen or upper division), or some combination of these. Programs or campuses are then authorized (subject to approval) to include supplemental admission criteria to screen applicants within a specific enrollment category. CSU campuses are required to provide first priority to local admission area applicants for each impacted program.

The CSU reports that across the system dozens of academic programs are impacted, including nursing, business administration, electrical engineering, psychology and social work. Additionally, five campuses, Fullerton, Long Beach, San Diego, San José, and San Luis Obispo, are impacted for all undergraduate degree programs. According to the CSU, of the 193,000 undergraduates enrolled in the CSU’s impacted programs for the fall 2025 semester, approximately 36% of these students, nearly 70,000 in total, transferred from a CCC. Consideration of whether additional support should be provided to CSU to increase enrollment in high-demand areas prior to expanding CCC bachelor’s degree authority in overlapping areas is also warranted.

Campuses may discontinue impaction upon approval by presenting evidence of sufficient, long term capacity as part of their request. This bill clarifies that a community college baccalaureate degree program once approved under the impacted based duplication exception may continue to be offered regardless of any subsequent change in impaction status of the corresponding CSU program. Additionally, this bill relies on CSU program impaction as defined as a trigger for local duplication and provides an opportunity to address capacity issues prior to full implementation.

*Local Admission Area.* This measure imposes geographic limits specifically around a CSU campus’ local admission area and CCC district territory. Current law establishes how CCC district territories are defined, organized, and governed within the state. However, local admission areas are not as clearly delineated in statute. As such, this bill specifies how local service areas are to be determined.

*Arguments in support.* According to a joint letter representing dozens of CCC campuses across the state, SB 960 (Cabaldon) “...addresses a critical gap in current law by recognizing that the mere existence of a program within the [CSU] system does not guarantee meaningful access for students. In many regions, CSU programs in high-demand technical fields are impacted due to capacity issues, leaving students without a viable pathway to complete a bachelor’s degree aligned with workforce needs. By allowing CCDs to offer a baccalaureate degree when a comparable program has been impacted for three consecutive years, SB 960

represents a thoughtful approach that helps ensure that place-bound students are not indefinitely denied access to high-demand programs due to capacity constraints.

The coalition continues, writing that “SB 960 aligns higher education policy with workforce realities by enabling regions to respond more effectively to persistent labor market needs, particularly in applied and technical fields such as biomanufacturing and engineering technology. Expanding access to locally available, workforce-oriented bachelor’s degrees will strengthen economic mobility for students and support the state’s long-term economic competitiveness. Our community colleges are uniquely positioned to help close this gap, ensuring that all Californians have access to an affordable four-year degree.”

*Arguments in opposition.* The CSU Office of the Chancellor wrote in opposition to SB 960 (Cabaldon), noting that “dozens of academic programs as varied as nursing, business administration, electrical engineering, psychology and social work are impacted at a number of CSU universities. Additionally, five universities (Fullerton, Long Beach, San Diego, San José and San Luis Obispo) are impacted for all undergraduate degree programs. Across all our universities, more than 193,000 undergraduate students were enrolled in the CSU’s impacted programs for the Fall 2025 semester. Approximately 36% of these students, nearly 70,000 in total, transferred from a California Community College. The CSU Chancellor’s Office has been working and will continue to work with impacted campuses to increase access. For example, over the last three years, \$89 million dollars of annual funding and 10,000 FTES slots have been shifted from under enrolled campuses to campuses that are growing. The Chancellor’s Office has also allocated \$40 million of one-time funding to support enrollment growth at in-demand campuses. Impaction is the result of a lack of equitable state investment in the CSU. While the community colleges benefit from Proposition 98’s guaranteed funding, local tax revenue and access to bond authority for facility needs, the state’s investment to the CSU is often lagging and unpredictable. For some programs, such as our pre-licensure Bachelor of Science in nursing programs, impaction is driven almost entirely by factors outside of the CSU’s control, including the limited capacity for clinical placements.”

The CSU Office of the Chancellor also wrote that “the CSU believes that any proposal that significantly expands the Community Colleges’ baccalaureate degree authority should include, at minimum, statewide duplication standards to ensure the efficient use of state resources, demonstration of meeting a clear workforce need, and a prohibition on substantially similar programs where CSU or UC programs are already accessible and effectively serving the region. Community colleges should demonstrate that they are meeting performance benchmarks for their core mission, including associate degree completion and transfer to four-year institutions, before offering new baccalaureate degree programs. We should also require annual reporting on the status and completion rates of these programs. Finally, proposals should include a full fiscal analysis across higher education segments and K-12 to understand how these degree expansions will impact Prop. 98 funding distributions and each segment’s core mission. Legislators should consider whether Prop. 98 funding should be used for bachelor’s degree programs, and if so, whether the CSU should also be able to access Prop. 98 funding for its own baccalaureate programs. The state should support the expansion of baccalaureate degree programs through partnership programs, including clear limits and written agreement when programs are substantially similar, while continuing to bolster each segment’s core mission.”

*Committee comments.* SB 960 (Cabaldon) represents a meaningfully different approach to the same underlying challenge addressed by AB 2694 (Alvarez); which this Committee approved

earlier this session. Both bills respond to a shared concern: that the existing statutory prohibition on Community College Baccalaureate Program duplication does not account for the regional nature of California's public higher education system, and that place-bound students in some regions of the state may be denied access to workforce-aligned baccalaureate programs because of duplication concerns raised by CSU campuses that are unable to enroll students from those regions. SB 960 addresses this concern by narrowing the geographic scope of the duplication prohibition rather than redefining the duplication standard itself.

Where AB 2694 (Alvarez) introduces a new "substantially similar" standard applied within a "geographic region" defined by the CCC Chancellor, SB 960 (Cabaldon) retains the existing "already offered" standard and ties it to the existing CSU local admission service area framework. SB 960 (Cabaldon) also preserves the existing statewide prohibition on duplication of UC programs, leaves the existing intersegmental consultation and objection process intact, and adds a single, time-delayed exception tied to an objective enrollment measure — CSU's three-year impaction designation, becoming operative July 1, 2030.

*The Committee may wish to consider both approaches and may need to address how the two frameworks will be reconciled if both bills continue to advance.*

*Impaction as a duplication trigger.* The use of CSU impaction as the trigger for the local-area exception in SB 960 is a notable policy choice. Impaction reflects situations in which the number of eligible CSU applications during the initial filing period exceeds the program's capacity, and it is an objective, CSU-defined indicator that the existing baccalaureate pipeline is not meeting demand. As the CSU Office of the Chancellor notes in its opposition letter, however, impaction is not always a clean signal of unmet workforce demand. In some programs — such as pre-licensure Bachelor of Science in nursing — impaction is driven primarily by external constraints, including the limited availability of clinical placements, rather than by CSU's instructional capacity alone. In other programs, impaction reflects broader patterns of state investment, including the predictability of CSU's funding base relative to the resources available to community colleges.

*The Committee may wish to consider whether the impaction trigger, as currently drafted, adequately distinguishes between unmet demand that a community college baccalaureate program could meaningfully address and demand constraints that would persist regardless of which segment offers the program.*

*A transitional pathway.* SB 960 includes a thoughtful transitional structure not present in other recent legislation in this space. Before July 1, 2030, a CSU campus that wishes to discontinue impaction status for a baccalaureate program must develop and publicly post a plan describing how the campus will address enrollment demand and maintain student access. This provision provides a window during which CSU campuses have a clear pathway to resolve impaction internally, and during which the Legislature, the Department of Finance, and the segments themselves can evaluate the conditions under which the impaction exception will take effect.

*The Committee may wish to consider whether this transitional period is being used as effectively as possible — including whether additional resources or technical assistance should be made available to CSU campuses seeking to address impaction in high-demand fields.*

*Institutional capacity and the CCC mission.* The CCC's primary statutory mission, as established in EDC Section 66010.4, is the offering of lower-division academic and vocational instruction, including pathways to transfer. As noted in the background section above, recent data indicates that 18% of community college students who began their studies in 2019-20 transferred to a four-year institution within four years, and that the absolute number of students transferring to UC and CSU declined by 6.9% between 2021 and 2025. These figures are particularly relevant to the policy questions raised by SB 960. *As the Committee considers whether to expand the conditions under which CCDs may offer baccalaureate degree programs, it is also reasonable to examine whether districts are meeting the foundational obligations of their statutory mission.*

A CCD that is not effectively serving students through associate degree completion and transfer pathways may be less well-positioned to take on the additional responsibilities of baccalaureate program administration. This concern informed the Committee's recent amendments to AB 2694 (Alvarez), which required districts to demonstrate performance on its benchmarks and goals for associate degree and certificate completion as a condition of baccalaureate program eligibility.

*The Committee may wish to consider whether SB 960 would similarly benefit from eligibility standards tied to district performance on core mission metrics — including completion, transfer, and equity gap closure consistent with the benchmarks set forth in the CCC Vision 2030 strategic plan — and may wish to consider whether the author's proposed framework should establish those standards directly.*

*Collaboration and partnership.* Both proponents and opponents of recent baccalaureate expansion legislation have identified intersegmental partnership as a preferred mechanism for expanding access. The CSU Office of the Chancellor, in its opposition letter, points to existing tools — including 2+2 programs, co-located degrees, and post-associate pathways such as ADN-to-BSN — as available mechanisms for expanding baccalaureate access that do not require new independent program authorization. The CSU letter further notes that any proposal on this topic "should first prioritize and incentivize the development of these partnerships when possible." Existing law, however, does not require a CCD to pursue collaborative options before applying for an independent baccalaureate program, and contains no structured pathway to recognize or reward jointly developed programs.

The Committee's proposed amendments to AB 2694 (Alvarez) addressed this in part by requiring a documented, good-faith partnership effort prior to independent application submission in cases of substantial similarity, *though Committee staff notes that an agreement was not reached on how this would work operationally, and AB 2694 (Alvarez) was not amended out of this Committee to reflect good-faith partnerships.*

*The Committee may wish to consider whether SB 960 (Cabaldon) should incorporate a partnership-first framework — providing a defined window during which a CCD and the relevant CSU or UC campus may identify opportunities for collaborative program development before an independent baccalaureate authorization is pursued.*

*Workforce evidence and intersegmental data systems.* Existing law requires a CCD seeking authorization to offer a baccalaureate degree program to document unmet workforce needs through evidence that includes consultation with regional employers and regional workforce development boards, along with statewide and regional workforce data.

As the Committee considers SB 960's reliance on workforce demand as a justification for baccalaureate expansion, it is worth considering whether the existing workforce evidence requirements adequately leverage the data infrastructure the state has invested in for exactly this purpose. AB 1098 (Fong & Padilla), Chapter 446, Statutes of 2025, requires the California Education Interagency Council to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Labor and Workforce Development Agency to access labor market and workforce data systems, support the integration of education and workforce planning, and identify in-demand skills and occupations.

*The Committee may wish to consider whether existing workforce evidence should expressly include data and analysis from the Labor and Workforce Development Agency, ensuring that baccalaureate program approvals are informed by the state's primary source of labor market intelligence and grounded in the intersegmental coordination framework established by AB 1098 (Fong & Padilla).*

*Sunset and legislative review.* SB 960 (Cabaldon) represents a substantial expansion of the conditions under which CCDs may offer baccalaureate degree programs, including a redefinition of the geographic scope of the duplication prohibition and a new exception tied to CSU enrollment capacity. Changes of this scope may warrant ongoing legislative attention to ensure that the expanded provisions are working as intended. On March 17, 2026, this Committee participated in a Joint Sunset Review hearing for the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education, which provided an opportunity to examine the Bureau's performance, identify areas of concern, and consider statutory modifications informed by several years of implementation experience. That process illustrates how sunset review can serve as a structured mechanism for the Legislature to make intentional, evidence-based policy adjustments.

*The Committee may wish to consider whether the expanded provisions of SB 960 should be subject to a sunset date that would require affirmative legislative action to extend or modify them, or if additional analysis and reporting should be required as the scope of the Community College Baccalaureate Degree program expands.*

*Committee amendments.* The Committee recommends, and author has accepted, amendments that would do the following:

- 1) *Annual legislative reporting.* Requires the Chancellor of the CCC to annually report to the Legislature on the status of baccalaureate degree programs. The report shall include information on program approvals, the performance benchmarks and goals established by the Board of Governors, district standing relative to those benchmarks, collaborative efforts pursued with CSU or UC, and student outcome data including completion rates and employment outcomes.
- 2) *Workforce evidence from the Labor and Workforce Development Agency.* Require a CCD seeking authorization to offer a baccalaureate degree program to include, as part of the workforce evidence submitted under existing law, labor market data and analysis from the Labor and Workforce Development Agency, consistent with the intersegmental coordination framework established by AB 1098 (Fong & Padilla), Chapter 446, Statutes of 2025.

*Related legislation.* AB 664 (Alvarez) authorizes the Chancellor of the CCC to allow the Southwestern Community College District (SWCCD) to offer no more than four workforce-aligned baccalaureate degrees programs, as provided. Requires interim and final reports from the

LAO, and sunsets the provisions on January 1, 2035. AB 664 is currently pending a hearing in the Senate Committee on Education.

AB 2053 (Ta) authorizes the Chancellor of the CCC to authorize Coast CCD to offer a workforce-aligned cybersecurity baccalaureate degree program at Coastline College, as provided. Require the LAO to, on or before July 1, 2030, conduct and present to the Legislature and the Governor an interim evaluation of the baccalaureate degree program that is offered pursuant to that authorization and, on or before July 1, 2034, a final evaluation of that degree program, as provided. AB 2053 (Ta) was held in the Assembly Committee on Higher Education Committee on Higher Education.

AB 2136 (Pacheco) authorizes the BOG of the CCC to authorize the Cerritos CCD to offer up to three applied baccalaureate degree programs in the fields of public safety management, paralegal studies, and automotive technology. AB 2136 (Pacheco) was held by the author in the Assembly Committee on Higher Education.

AB 2301 (Soria) requires the CCC Chancellor's Office to develop a Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing (BSN) Pilot Program that authorizes select CCDs to offer a BSN degree. The bill would limit the pilot program to 10 CCDs statewide and would require the CCCCO to identify and select eligible CCDs based on specified criteria. AB 2301 (Soria) is currently pending a hearing in the Senate Committee on Education.

AB 2694 (Alvarez) Expands the existing CCD baccalaureate degree program by authorizing program duplication if there is no substantially similar program offered at the CSU or UC within that geographic region. Additionally, makes several technical changes, increasing required demonstration by an applicant of specified academic performance benchmarks, decreasing the percentage of baccalaureate programs that may be offered by a CCD, and requiring annual reporting to the Legislature. AB 2694 (Alvarez) is currently pending a hearing in the Senate Committee on Education.

*Prior legislation.* AB 1400 (Soria), of 2025, would have required Chancellor of the CCC to develop a BSN Pilot Program that authorizes select CCDs to offer a BSN degree. AB 1400 was vetoed by the Governor. The Governor's veto read, in part:

Last year, I vetoed a nearly identical bill, citing two primary reasons that continue to persist.

First, the 2024 Budget Agreement included \$60 million per year, from 2025-26 to 2028-29, for the Rebuilding Nursing Infrastructure Grant Program, which may be used to develop or expand BSN partnerships with UC, CSU, and independent nonprofit higher education institutions. These partnerships have proven successful in expanding BSN access for community college students and increasing the number of BSN degree recipients. All segments of higher education must continue to collaborate on building these programs, and returning this bill will ensure those collaborative efforts are not undermined.

Second, in recent years, both the CCC and the CSU have been authorized to offer independent programs outside of their traditional roles, provided they do not duplicate degree offerings of other public segments. I encourage the CCC system to focus on implementing this expanded authority and to ensure that it can continue to make progress on the unique and vital role the CCC plays in serving its students and the state. Given these significant changes,

a pause should be maintained to understand their full impact before additional authorities are granted.

AB 1098 (Fong & Padilla), Chapter 446, Statutes of 2025, is described in *Higher education coordination* above.

SB 155 (Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review), Chapter 71, Statutes of 2024, created Rebuilding Nursing Infrastructure Grant Program to expand nursing programs and partnerships, address nursing shortages, and increase, educate, and maintain the next generation of registered nurses through the community college system. The Budget Act of 2024 supported this program with \$60 million Proposition 98 General Fund per year for five years, starting in 2024-25, with CCC Strong Workforce Program funding.

AB 2401 (Soria) of 2024, would have required Chancellor of the CCC to develop a BSN Pilot Program that authorizes select CCD to offer a BSN degree. AB 2401 (Soria) was vetoed by the Governor.

SB 895 (Roth) of 2024, would have required the CCC Chancellor's Office to establish a Community College BSN Pilot Program that would authorize 10 CCDs to offer a BSN degree. AB 895 (Roth) was vetoed by the Governor.

AB 656 (McCarty), Chapter 663, Statutes of 2023, authorized the CSU to award professional or applied doctoral degrees statewide that do not duplicate UC doctoral degrees and satisfy certain requirements. Required a CSU campus seeking authorization to offer a professional or applied doctoral degree to submit specified information on the proposed doctoral degree for review by the office of the Chancellor of the CSU, and approval by the CSU Board of Trustees, as provided.

AB 1311 (Soria), Chapter 126, Statutes of 2023, required the LAO to conduct an assessment, on or before January 1, 2025, evaluating the efficacy of existing programs in allied health jointly offered between campuses of the California Community Colleges, the California State University, and the University of California. Required the final assessment to be reported, in writing, to the Legislature and the Governor on or before January 1, 2025, as specified.

SB 684 (Hueso), Chapter 936, Statutes of 2022, authorized CSU to offer the DrPH degree, and specified that DrPH degree programs offered by the CSU will focus on health and scientific knowledge translation and transformative community leadership.

AB 927 (Medina and Choi), Chapter 565, Statutes of 2021, removed the cap on the total number of baccalaureate degree programs allowed within the CCC system and eliminates the January 1, 2027, sunset date of the statewide baccalaureate degree pilot program, thereby permanently authorizing the offering of baccalaureate degree programs at CCCs.

SB 874 (Hill) of 2020, would have extended the operation of the statewide baccalaureate degree pilot program indefinitely. The bill would have removed the requirements that the program consist of a maximum of 15 CCD programs and for a student to commence a program by the end of the 2022–23 academic year. SB 874 was held in the Senate Committee on Education due to bill restrictions from COVID-19.

AB 829 (Bloom), Chapter 183, Statutes of 2019, authorized CSU to offer the OTD degree, and specifies that OTD degree programs offered by the CSU will focus on preparing occupational therapists to provide health care services and to be consistent with the standards for accreditation set forth by the appropriate accrediting body.

SB 577 (Dodd), Chapter 603, Statutes of 2018, established the CCC Teacher Credentialing Partnership Pilot Program, awarding grants to collaboratives of one or more teacher-credentialing higher education institutions partnering with one or more community colleges for the purpose of offering teacher credentialing programs at community colleges.

AB 422 (Arambula), Chapter 702, Statutes of 2017, authorized CSU to offer the DNP degree programs, and specified that the DNP offered by the CSU shall focus on the preparation of nursing faculty to teach in postsecondary nursing education programs and may also train nurses for advanced nursing practice or nurse leadership.

SB 769 (Hill) of 2017, would have extended the operation of the statewide baccalaureate degree pilot program until July 1, 2028. SB 769 was held in the Assembly Committee on Appropriations.

AB 2317 (Mullin), Chapter 267, Statutes of 2016, authorized the CSU to offer the Au.D degree, and specified that the Au.D degree programs at the CSU must be focused on preparing audiologists to provide health care services and be consistent with the standards for accreditation set forth by the Council on Academic Accreditation in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology.

SB 850 (Block), Chapter 747, Statutes of 2014, authorized the CCC BOG, in consultation with the CSU and the UC, to establish a baccalaureate degree pilot program. The pilot program allowed up to 15 participating CCDs to offer one baccalaureate degree program each to meet local workforce needs as long as it does not duplicate a baccalaureate degree program already offered by the CSU or the UC.

AB 661 (Block) of 2011, authorized Grossmont-Cuyamaca and the San Mateo CCDs to offer one baccalaureate degree pilot program per campus. AB 661 was heard and passed in the Assembly Higher Education Committee by a vote of 6-0 but was moved to the inactive file on the Assembly Floor.

AB 2400 (Block) of 2010, authorized the San Diego, Grossmont-Cuyamaca and San Mateo CCDs to establish baccalaureate degree pilot programs. No vote was taken and AB 2400 was held in the Assembly Higher Education Committee.

AB 2382 (Blumenfield), Chapter 425, Statutes of 2010, authorized the CSU to offer the D.P.T. degree, and specified that the D.P.T. degree programs at the CSU shall be focused on preparing physical therapists to provide health care services, and shall be consistent with meeting the requirements of the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education.

SB 724 (Scott), Chapter 269, Statutes of 2005, authorized the CSU to independently award the Ed.D degree focused solely on preparing administrative leaders for California public K-14 schools.

**REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

**Support**

Allan Hancock College  
Antelope Valley Community College District  
Association of California Community College Administrators  
Barstow Community College  
Cabrillo Community College  
Calbright College  
California Community College Baccalaureate Association  
California School Employees Association  
Campaign for College Opportunity  
Cerritos College  
Chabot-las Positas Community College District  
Chaffey College  
Citrus College  
Clovis Community College  
Coalinga College  
Coast Community College District  
College of Marin  
College of the Canyons  
College of the Desert  
College of the Redwoods  
College of the Sequoias  
College of the Siskiyous  
Columbia College  
Community College League of California  
Contra Costa Community College District  
Copper Mountain College  
Cuesta College  
De Anza College  
El Camino College  
Evergreen Valley College  
Faculty Association of California Community Colleges  
Feather River College  
Foothill College  
Foothill-de Anza Community College District  
Fresno City College  
Gavilan College  
Glendale Community College  
Greater Sacramento Urban League  
Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District  
Hartnell College  
Imperial Valley College  
Kern Community College District  
Lake Tahoe Community College  
Lassen Community College  
Lemoore College

Long Beach City College  
Long Beach Community College District  
Los Angeles Community College District  
Los Angeles Pierce College  
Madera Community College  
Mendocino College  
Merced College  
Miracosta College  
Modesto Junior College  
Mt. San Antonio College  
Mt. San Jacinto Community College  
North Orange Community College District  
North Orange County Community College District  
Ohlone College  
Palo Verde College  
Palomar Community College District  
Peralta Community College District  
Power California Action  
Rancho Santiago Community College District  
Reedley College  
Rio Hondo College  
Riverside City College  
Riverside Community College District  
San Bernardino Community College District  
San Diego City College  
San Diego Community College District  
San Diego Continuing Education  
San Diego Mesa College  
San Diego Miramar College  
San Francisco Community College District  
San Jose City College  
San Jose-Evergreen Community College District  
San Mateo County Community College District  
Santa Monica College  
Santa Rosa Junior College  
Shasta College  
Sierra College  
Solano Community College  
South Orange County Community College District  
Southwestern College  
Southwestern Community College District  
State Center Community College District  
Student Senate for California Community Colleges  
Taft College  
Ventura County Community College District  
Victor Valley College  
Victor Valley Community College District  
West Hills Community College District  
West Valley-mission Community College District

Yosemite Community College District  
Yuba College  
Yuba Community College District

**Opposition**

California Faculty Association  
California State University, Office of the Chancellor

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