

Date of Hearing: June 14, 2022

**ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

Jose Medina, Chair

SB 785 (Glazer) – As Amended April 8, 2021

**SENATE VOTE:** 36-0

**SUBJECT:** Public postsecondary education: California Promise Program: California State University students.

**SUMMARY:** Requires, commencing with the 2022-23 academic year (AY), that at least 5% of each incoming class participate in the California Promise Program at each participating campus of the California State University (CSU) [that offers the Program]; requires that at least 70% of those participants be low-income students, first-generation students, or students from underrepresented communities; and, makes technical and clarifying changes to existing law.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Establishes the California Promise Program for the purposes of supporting CSU students in earning a baccalaureate degree within four academic years of the student's first year of enrollment, or for transfer students, within two academic years of the student's first year of enrollment to the campus.
- 2) Requires the Trustees of the CSU to:
  - a) Develop and implement a California Promise Program, beginning the 2017-18 academic year, at a minimum of eight campuses for non-transfer students and a minimum of 15 campuses (20 campuses by 2018-19) for qualifying transfer students. These campuses enter into a pledge with a first-time freshman or with a qualifying transfer student to support the student in obtaining a baccalaureate degree within a total of four academic years;
  - b) Submit a report to legislative policy and fiscal committees by January 1, 2021, that includes the number of students participating in the Program in total, the total number of students who graduated in four academic years for students who entered as first-time freshman and two academic years for California Community College transfer students, and a summary description of significant differences in the implementation of the California Promise Program at each campus; and,
  - c) Submit recommendations to the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature, by March 15, 2017, regarding potential financial incentives that could benefit students who participate in the California Promise Program.
- 3) Requires support provided by a CSU campus for a California Promise Program student to include, but not necessarily be limited to, both of the following:
  - a) Priority registration in coursework provided that a student does not qualify for priority registration under another policy or Program, as specified; and,

- b) Academic advisement that includes monitoring academic progress.
- 4) Requires a student, in order to qualify for the Program to:
- a) Be a California resident for purposes of in-state tuition eligibility; and,
  - b) Commit to completing at least 30 semester units or the quarter equivalent per academic year, including summer term units, as specified.
- 5) Requires a campus to guarantee participation in the Program to, at a minimum, any student who is a low-income student, as defined, a student who has graduated from a high school located in a community that is underrepresented in college attendance, a first-generation college student or a transfer student who successfully completes his or her associate degree for transfer at a community college.
- 6) Establishes that, as a condition of continued participation in a California Promise Program, a student may be required to demonstrate both of the following:
- a) Completion of at least 30 semester units, or the quarter equivalent, in each prior academic year; and,
  - b) Attainment of a grade point average in excess of a standard established by the campus.
- 7) Sunsets the Program on January 1, 2026 (Education Code Section 67430, et seq.).

**FISCAL EFFECT:** According to the Senate Committee on Appropriations, the CSU estimates annual General Fund costs of approximately \$6.4 million and 82.5 additional outreach and advising staff to comply with the bill's requirements. This estimate assumes a salary of approximately \$52,000 and 50% benefits for both outreach and advising staff. Salaries could vary by campus location and does not include any subsequent year increases in salary or benefit costs.

**COMMENTS:** *California Promise Program.* The Program, which is voluntary or self-selected for eligible CSU students to participate, was enacted in 2016 (by SB 412 Glazer, Chapter 436, Statutes of 2016). The Program initially required eight CSU campuses to offer four-year Promise Programs and 20 CSU campuses to offer two-year Promise Programs.

Currently, 16 of the 23 campuses of the CSU offer first-time freshmen Promise Programs and 22 of the 23 CSU campuses offer two-year Promise Programs for eligible transfer students. Campuses of the CSU who participate in the Program enter into a pledge with a first-time freshman or with a qualifying transfer student to support the student in obtaining a baccalaureate degree within four academic years or within two for transfer students. Students who commit to enter either the four-year or two-year pledge are given priority registration and are provided with routine and thorough academic advisement.

The table below, as provided by the CSU Chancellor's Office, provides total student enrollment numbers at each campus for the past five years, which CSU campuses currently offer Promise Programs, and the number of students participating in the Program:

	Fall 2021		Fall 2020		Fall 2019		Fall 2018		Fall 2017	
<b>Campus</b>	Total Enrollment	Promise Enrollment	Total Enrollment	Promise Enrollment	Total Enrollment	Promise Enrollment	Total Enrollment	Promise Enrollment	Total Enrollment	Promise Enrollment
Bakersfield	2,027	15	2,650	12	2,976	297	2,573	239	2,331	8
Channel Islands	1,574	150	1,809	96	2,095	88	2,071	23	2,193	10
Chico	3,300	16	3,751	23	4,064	16	4,158	0	4,195	0
Dominguez Hills	4,639	14	5,472	2,637	5,960	0	4,911	119	4,421	0
East Bay	2,677	45	3,199	61	3,570	60	3,513	29	3,673	0
Fresno	5,994	189	6,348	230	5,217	125	5,569	68	5,433	6
Fullerton	8,105	294	9,909	595	8,558	282	7,694	171	7,886	104
Humboldt	1,277	49	1,424	92	1,529	68	1,840	81	2,066	73
Long Beach	8,994	1,253	9,689	1,415	9,575	1,412	8,792	758	7,593	0
Los Angeles	7,744	27	7,269	26	6,115	0	6,744	0	6,691	0
Maritime Academy	257	0	253	0	266	0	274	0	274	0
Monterey Bay	1,698	170	1,790	173	1,957	172	1,801	136	1,672	54
Northridge	10,393	72	10,412	87	10,428	119	10,038	83	9,834	53
Pomona	6,577	647	8,305	494	6,879	351	7,392	53	6,543	26
Sacramento	7,689	1,028	7,787	2,801	7,818	2,842	7,093	2,219	6,959	2,615
San Bernardino	4,652	130	5,089	122	5,500	139	4,948	206	4,679	85
San Diego	7,578	230	8,316	123	8,200	133	7,779	230	7,382	93
San Francisco	5,824	193	5,511	227	6,889	243	7,239	276	7,646	273
San Jose	7,545	602	7,187	615	7,849	684	7,169	1,000	8,461	1,596
San Luis Obispo	4,571	2	4,663	5	4,379	5	4,414	1	5,173	0
San Marcos	4,092	77	4,269	100	4,026	97	4,392	12	4,134	8
Sonoma	1,634	65	1,547	19	2,248	24	2,530	10	2,579	10
Stanislaus	2,252	184	2,545	0	2,909	147	2,502	25	2,413	0

*Need for the measure.* According to the author, “The CSU awards nearly half of California’s bachelor’s degrees with more than half of CSU students being students of color. While systemwide graduation rates are improving, more can be done to increase rates of California students receiving their bachelor’s degrees within four years.”

The author argues that, “In a review of campus home pages, there is little attention paid to the California Promise Program. On average, it takes six clicks from the campus home page to get the California Promise program. This lack of publicity impedes students from taking advantage of graduating in a timely manner.”

Lastly, the author contends that, “The system continues to struggle with graduation gaps for underrepresented students, and the system’s graduation rates still lag behind those of similar universities nationwide.”

*Graduation Initiative 2025.* In 2015, CSU launched Graduation Initiative 2025 (GI 2025), its ambitious plan to increase graduation rates, eliminate equity gaps in degree completion and meet California’s workforce needs.

According to the CSU Chancellor’s Office, the CSU continues to experience a record-breaking rise in graduation rates systemwide, yet equity gaps are growing. The first-year class that entered

in fall 2019 represents the cohort of students on which 6-year graduation rates and equity gaps will be measured in 2025. The COVID-19 pandemic and the disparate impacts across communities of color and low-income families have created a renewed urgency to close the gaps that exists between underserved and vulnerable students and their peers. Not since GI 2025 launched five years ago has the need to marshal the CSU's collective resources been more critical to address differential patterns of student success.

The CSU, through the GI 2025 has the following graduation completion goals for first-year and transfer students:

First-Year 4-Year Goal – 40% by 2025 (as of 2021, the CSU is at 33%);

First-Year 6-Year Goal – 70% by 2025 (as of 2021, the CSU is at 63%);

Transfer Students 2-Year Goal – 45% by 2025 (as of 2021, the CSU is at 44%); and,

Transfer Students 4-Year Goal – 85% by 2025 (as of 2021, the CSU is at 80%)

The Promise Program requires that students must self-select to participate in the Program, and, CSU campuses are already devoting resources to raising awareness of the Program. However, this measure appears to have the potential to take away some of the on-going efforts, priorities, and resources as established in GI 2025 in order to increase participation in the Program.

*The Committee may wish to examine if this measure is premature in nature and if GI 2025 should be completed and data released on its outcomes before adding another component that may increase the graduation rates, but only benefiting some students.*

*Committee comments and amendments.* As presently drafted, this measure, in part, requires, commencing with 2022-23 AY, at least 5% of each incoming class participate in the California Promise Program at each participating campus of the CSU (who offers the Program). Further, the measure requires that, commencing with 2022-23 AY, at least 70% of the students participating in the Program be either low-income students, first-generation students, or students that are underrepresented in higher education.

The measure is silent as to how each CSU campus will ensure that at least 5% of each incoming class participate in the Program. As noted in the “California Promise Program” section of this analysis, students are not coerced into participating in this Program, students self-select their participation.

It is unclear how each campus of the CSU is expected to ensure that, at a minimum, 5% of each incoming class opt-in to participate in this program. Further, the bill is silent as to methods each campus of the CSU may follow or adhere to if or when a campus of the CSU is unable to meet the stringent requirement as established in this measure.

*Moving forward, the author may wish to delete the mandate that each campus of the CSU have at least 5% of each incoming class participate in the Program.*

Further, according to systemwide data provided by the author, the CSU is close to reaching the requirement as delineated in this measure, that at least 70% of the students participating in the

Program be either low-income students, first-generation students, or students that are underrepresented in higher education. However, when this data is disaggregated, it appears that some CSU campuses are not close to meeting the requirements as established in this measure.

Additionally, this measure is currently silent as to how all participating campuses of the CSU are expected to ensure that at least 70% of participating students meet the specified demographics. What happens if participating campuses of the CSU have more than 30% of their students participating in the Program that do not comply with the prescriptive demographics?

*Moving forward, the author may wish to work with the CSU in order to explore whether or not 70% is an appropriate benchmark in the first year of implementing the next phase of this Program and if it takes away from the broader college completion efforts as established in the CSU's GI 2025.*

Further, by specifically requiring specified demographics to comprise an overwhelming majority of the students who participate in the Program, it is unclear if this may result in the violation of Article 31 of the California Constitution (Proposition 209 of 1996).

*Moving forward, the author may wish to work with the Office of Legislative Counsel and the CSU in order to ascertain if this provision violates any aspect of Article 31 of the California Constitution.*

Lastly, as currently drafted, this measure requires the CSU to comply with the aforementioned requirements of this measure commencing AY 2022-23. That timeline does not appear to provide all participating CSU campuses ample time to implement and meet the requirements contained therein.

*With the aforementioned in mind, the Committee recommends, and the author has accepted, the following amendments:*

67434 (d) Commencing with the ~~2022-23~~ 2023-24 academic year....

*Prior and related legislation.*

SB 1211 (Glazer) of 2020, which was not heard in the Senate Committee on Education Committee due to the shortened 2020 Legislative Calendar, was virtually identical to this measure.

SB 148 (Glazer) of 2019, which was held on the Suspense File by the Assembly Committee on Appropriations, would have established the Student Success and On-time Completion Fund in the State Treasury, and authorized the Trustees of the CSU to use money in the fund to incentivize participation in a California Promise Program through the offering of grants or tuition freeze, as specified. SB 148 also required CSU to waive systemwide tuition or fees for a participating student unable to complete their degree due to limited space or no course offerings, as specified.

SB 346 (Glazer) of 2018, which failed passage on the Assembly Floor, was virtually identical to SB 148 in its final form.

SB 803 (Glazer) of 2017, which was held on the Suspense File by the Senate Committee on Appropriations, was nearly identical to SB 346 (as described above).

**REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:****Support**

National Association of Social Workers, California Chapter

**Opposition**

None on file.

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