

Date of Hearing: April 8, 2021

**ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

Jose Medina, Chair

AB 1290 (Lee) – As Introduced February 19, 2021

**SUBJECT:** Student Aid Commission.

**SUMMARY:** Expands the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) to include two additional student members. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Provides that CSAC shall consist of four student members, one from each of the following postsecondary educational institutions:
  - a) The University of California (UC);
  - b) The California State University (CSU);
  - c) The California Community Colleges (CCC); and,
  - d) A California private postsecondary educational institution.
- 2) Clarifies that the student member must be enrolled in the postsecondary educational institution the student attends at the time of appointment and during the duration of the term.
- 3) Clarifies that a student member who graduates with no more than six months of the student member's term remaining shall be permitted to serve for the remainder of the term.
- 4) Makes technical and clarifying changes to existing law.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Establishes CSAC to administer California's student financial aid programs. The CSAC is comprised of the following 15 members:
  - a) Eleven members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate:
    - i) Three representatives from the general public;
    - ii) One representative from a California secondary school;
    - iii) Two student representatives each of whom must be enrolled in a California postsecondary educational institution;
    - iv) One representative from the University of California;
    - v) One representative from the California State University;
    - vi) One representative from the California Community Colleges;
    - vii) One representative from a California independent college or university; and,

- viii) One representative from a public, proprietary, or nonprofit postsecondary school located in California.
  - b) Two representatives appointed by the Senate Rules Committee; and,
  - c) Two representatives appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly (Education Code (EC) Section 69510).
- 2) Provides that student members appointed to the CSAC:
- a) Be enrolled in postsecondary educational institutions for the duration of the two-year terms;
  - b) Upon expiration of the student member's two-year term, if the Governor has not appointed a successor, the student member may remain in office for one additional year or until the Governor appoints a successor, whichever occurs first;
  - c) May not be enrolled in the same segment of higher education. The segments of higher education are designated as the UC, the CSU, the CCC, independent institutions (non-profit), and for-profit institutions; and,
  - d) If a student member who attends a qualifying institution, as defined, is not the recipient of a Cal Grant award, will have their tuition waived up to the maximum award amount for that institution, for the duration of the student member's term of office (EC Section 69511).
- 3) Provides that the CSAC is responsible for determining the appropriate student organization for each segment, and each student organization is required to inform students within their respective segment of pending CSAC student member vacancies and each student organization is authorized to submit a list of three to five nominees for membership. A student member appointed to the CSAC may not be in the same segment of the outgoing or the other sitting student member (EC Section 69511.5).

**FISCAL EFFECT:** Unknown

**COMMENTS:** *Background of the CSAC.* The CSAC is comprised of 15 appointed members which represent higher education segments, students, community leaders and more. The Executive Team of the CSAC works closely with the Commissioners (members) in order to create policies, programs, and initiatives to assist students' ability to afford to attend college.

*Student representation on the CSAC.* As noted in the *Existing Law* section of this analysis, existing law only allows for two student members on CSAC; the two student positions rotate among four segments, representatives may not be enrolled in the same segment of the outgoing or the other sitting student member. Additionally, existing law also requires that the two student representatives on the CSAC be enrolled in the student representatives' respective institution for the duration of their term.

Rather than rotating the two student positions among the four segments, this measure establishes four fixed seats; thereby ensuring that the student voice of each segment is present on the CSAC. *Purpose of the measure.* According to the author, “AB 1290 will improve student representation on the California Student Aid Commission by adding two additional student commissioners to the Student Aid Commission so that there are four student members, one from each type of higher education institution.” Further, per the author, “Currently, the Student Aid Commission has two students that represent four different entities and are appointed on a rotating basis. This system means that only two types of institutions have student representatives on the commission at any given point, while there is one institutional representative for each of the four entities.”

The author contends that, “The needs of students attending different institutions can vary greatly, as financial aid needs and experiences for a student attending a private institution can be very different than a student attending a California Community College, a California State University, or the University of California. By having one student member from each type of institution, the Student Aid Commission will better reflect the needs of all students.”

*Prior legislation.* AB 2154 (Medina), Chapter 457, Statutes of 2016, which, in part, provided changes to the term and benefits for service as a student member of the CSAC.

AB 2766 (López) of 2016, which was similar to this measure, was vetoed by Governor Brown with the following message:

“This bill adds two additional student members to the California Student Aid Commission, bringing the total student membership to four, and the total commission membership to 17. The current participation of the two student members should be sufficient to advancing the interests of students and protecting the public interest.”

## **REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

### **Support**

Association of Independent California Colleges & Universities (AICCU)

### **Opposition**

None on file.

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