

Date of Hearing: April 2, 2019

**ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

Jose Medina, Chair

AB 514 (Medina) – As Introduced February 13, 2019

**SUBJECT:** Trustees of the California State University: student members

**SUMMARY:** This bill eliminates the prohibition against a student member voting during the student member's first year on the Board of the Trustees of the California State University (CSU).

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Existing law establishes the various campuses of the CSU under the administration of the Trustees of the CSU. (Education Code (EDC) Section 66010 et seq.)
- 2) Under current law, the CSU Board of Trustees is comprised of, at any time, 25 members, as follows:
  - a) Five (5) ex-officio members: (a) the Governor, (b) the Lieutenant Governor, (c) Speaker of the Assembly, (d) the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and (e) the Chancellor of the CSU;
  - b) Sixteen (16) Governor appointees confirmed by two-thirds of the Senate, each serving an eight-year term;
  - c) One (1) alumni association representative, who cannot be an employee of the CSU, appointed by the Governor serving a two-year term;
  - d) One (1) tenured CSU faculty representative appointed by the Governor, for a two-year term, from a list of names of at least two persons furnished by the CSU Academic Senate. The faculty member cannot participate on any subcommittees of the board responsible for collective bargaining negotiations; and,
  - e) Two (2) CSU students appointed by the Governor for staggered two-year terms from a list of nominees furnished by the governing board of any statewide student organization that represents CSU students and the student body organizations of the CSU campuses. Only one student is eligible to vote at any time. (EDC Section 66602)

**FISCAL EFFECT:** This bill was keyed non-fiscal by the Legislative Counsel.

**COMMENTS:** *Need for the bill.* According to the author, "Student members of the CSU Board of Trustees are only allowed to serve as voting members in the second year of their two-year appointment. Our CSU student trustees, already a minority of the board, are unable to maximize their voice under current law. AB 514 would ensure that student trustees at CSU are full voting members from the very beginning of their appointment."

“AB 514 would not alternate any part of the student trustee appointment process, the total amount of Trustees, or add any additional work for CSU staff to coordinate board meetings. AB 514 would simply increase the power of the student voice on the Board of Trustees.”

*Background.* The Board of Trustees is responsible for the oversight of the CSU. The Trustees adopt rules, regulations, and policies governing the CSU. The Trustees have authority over curricular development, use of property, development of facilities, and fiscal and human resources management.

The 25-member Board of Trustees meets six times per year. Board meetings allow for communication among the Trustees, Chancellor, campus presidents, executive committee members of the statewide Academic Senate, representatives of the California State Student Association, and officers of the statewide Alumni Council.

*Policy considerations.* In 1999, the Legislature added one additional student to the Board of Trustees. At that time, the California State Student Association (CSSA) believed additional representation was needed on behalf of students in order to assure their needs were being met. Furthermore, they had contended the student population had grown by incredible amounts since the initial inception of a student trustee. The CSSA argued it was nearly impossible for one student to represent the concerns of hundreds of thousands of students and 23 campuses, especially when there are a number of committees and subcommittees to attend as a representative of the Board of Trustees.

The two student members of the Board of Trustees serve staggered two-year terms, with the first year of a student’s membership limited to participation but not voting. The first year of a student’s membership is meant to serve as a learning experience to enable the student to be a more experienced and knowledgeable representative in his or her second year of membership on the Board.

This legislation would eliminate the prohibition against a student member voting during the member’s first year on the Board of the Trustees, enabling student members to fully participate in board activities during both years of their appointment.

*Arguments in support.* CSSA, the sponsor of this bill, writes that “In 1975, the first student trustee on the CSU Board of Trustees was established. Then in 1999, the non-voting trustee position was created as a result of the student population having had doubled. This non-voting trustee is appointed just like all other members, but after a year then becomes the voting student trustee. “

“Now in 2019, the student population has grown by nearly 200,000 students, and a new campus has been opened. The same justification that was used in 1999 to create the non-voting trustee should be applicable to vest a vote within both student trustees now. Additionally, this is the only position on the Board of Trustees in which the appointee must wait a year until they can vote, despite having experience critical to the board’s success and often much more experience with the CSU than other appointees.”

*Prior legislation.* AB 1062 (Levine) Chapter 524, Statutes of 2018, originally increased faculty representation and the voting rights of the student members of the CSU Board of Trustees. The

bill was amended, removing the content and instead expanded existing reporting requirements for the CSU Board of Trustees related to key performance data on online courses.

AB 2386 (Williams, 2016), vetoed, would have revised the membership of the Trustees of the CSU by requiring the Governor to appoint a permanent nonfaculty CSU employee for a two-year term.

SB 325 (Block) Chapter 175, Statutes of 2013, waived the tuition fee for student Trustees of the CSU for the duration of their terms of office and allowed sophomores to be appointed student Trustees.

SB 1515 (Yee, 2012) reduced the number of gubernatorial appointees requiring Senate confirmation, from 16 to 14, required one member to be a faculty member and one to be a represented permanent non-academic employee at the CSU, and increased the required number of students, from two to four. SB 1515 was held in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

#### **REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

##### **Support**

California State Student Association (Sponsor)  
Public Advocates, Inc.

##### **Opposition**

None on file

**Analysis Prepared by:** Kevin J. Powers / HIGHER ED. / (916) 319-3960