

CCCI California Community College Independents

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January 30, 2012

To: Members, Senate Education Committee
Members, Assembly Higher Education Committee
Members, Senate Budget Subcommittee on Education

Fr: Richard Hansen, CCCI President
Jeffrey Michels, CCCI Executive Secretary
David Balla-Hawkins, CCCI Advocate

RE: **California Community Colleges: Student Success Taskforce Report (SSTF)**

On behalf of the California Community College Independents (CCCI), an association of independent faculty unions representing over 12,000 community college faculty teaching over a half-million students, we are concerned about the unintended consequences of many of the recommendations outlined in the community college Student Success Taskforce Report (SSTF). As an active taskforce member that helped develop the SSTF report, CCCI strongly supports efforts to improve the academic success of our students but must oppose proposals that could diminish student access and introduce academic barriers.

Rather than rushing proposals through the State Legislature, **CCCI suggests a full year be set aside for further work on the SSTF recommendations** to avoid unintended consequences that could threaten the access and academic success of our state's most underserved communities. We believe the report's taskforce has begun important work, but we must emphasize the need for further investigation and consultation prior to implementing the SSTF recommendations.

The interdependence of these recommendations demands caution. Requiring declared educational plans, restricting unit load, insisting that students address skill shortfalls early, and monitoring student progress to qualify for Board of Governor student fee waivers all succeed only with a major expansion of counseling services. Without these essential services – and a major investment of funding to overcome the existing dismal systemwide ratio of one counselor for every 1,500 students – such recommendations could do more harm than good by shoving students out the door rather than showing them a path to success.

CCCI believes hasty implementation of the SSTF recommendations without further study and thorough investigation is both unnecessary and unwise. Without a thoughtful and deliberative approach, the state may end up abandoning the educational aspirations of tens of thousands of our most needy – but academically worthy – students. We therefore urge caution in your deliberations.

*Attachments: Los Angeles Times Editorial: Community college makeover (1.11.12)
Council of Faculty Organizations (CoFO) Letter re: SSTF Report (1.05.12)*