



## Kriss Worthington

Councilmember, City of Berkeley, District 7  
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### CONSENT CALENDAR

December 11, 2007

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council  
 From: Councilmembers Kriss Worthington and Darryl Moore  
 Subject: Support Proposition 92, The Community College Initiative

#### RECOMMENDATION:

Support Proposition 92 on the February 5, 2008 ballot, which would lower student fees, guarantee minimum funding for community college growth and increase access to higher education.

#### BACKGROUND:

Currently 2.5 million Californians attend community colleges. These students come from diverse gender, racial and socio-economic backgrounds. A substantial portion (60%) of these students are women. There are also a significant number of Latinos, African Americans and Asian Americans who are enrolled in community colleges.

Investing in community colleges not only ensures that these students have a chance for a decent living but it also is a good investment of public dollars. Community college students who earned a vocational degree or certificate saw their wages jump from \$ 25,600 to \$ 47,571 three years after earning their degree. Studies also show that for every dollar spend increasing the number of students attending any college and completing degrees, the state gets three dollars in return on that investment. However, the return on the state's investment in community colleges is dramatically better than that of the UC or CSU systems. Additionally, many CSU and UC graduates transfer from community colleges.

While community colleges provide an important service to the state, in recent years they have received inadequate funding. This is mainly due to the funding formula that is used. Currently community college funding is based on K-12 enrollment. However, these enrollments have been declining while the demand for community colleges has increased and will continue to increase over the next five years. Due to this formula, it is anticipated that 60% of all students who want to attend a community college will be shut out. Also previous budget crises led to cuts to community colleges resulting in significant fee increases and pricing many students out of a college education.

It is important that the state have a dedicated funding source for community colleges to ensure that fees will not be increased and to provide minimum funding for community college growth. Proposition 92 on the February 5, 2008 ballot will ensure this while not raising taxes or hurting funding for K-12 education.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None

CONTACT PERSON:

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