



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: May 18, 2009

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State Budget Cuts Undermine College as Economic Engine

MODESTO, CA – When cuts in funding for education are combined with increased enrollment at community colleges, an unmet demand is created for students seeking employment skills or furthering their education. The state's economic engine, the community college system, is put in a disadvantage to educate more, with less. The proposed cuts introduced in the Governor's May Revise last week, undermine community colleges' ability to provide education and training, which is vitally needed for the state to rebound from the current economic downturn.

Although reports indicate that deficits and cutting will still exist regardless of the outcome of the May 19 Propositions, support for the Governor's ballot measure package would at least ease the crisis. California's community colleges will face a historic downsizing by this budget. The budget would remove funding for between 140,000-175,000 full-time students in addition to the 50,000 currently being served without funding.

As California's unemployment rate continues to rise, four-year universities continue to turn away, and veterans return from abroad, enrollment demand at community colleges continues to increase. However, no federal funds appear to be proposed for California's community colleges, which are key to our economic recovery.

The proposed cuts of \$221-334 million to categorical programs will impact the Yosemite Community College District by an estimated \$2.65-4 million and would undercut access for key programs that benefit our community.

Community colleges have been belt-tightening for years. Community colleges receive one-half what the California State University receives per student and one-third what the University of California receives. This budget appears to provide a significantly larger cut to community colleges than other education entities.

The proposed \$200 million cut in the last 45 days of the fiscal year, has negatively impacted YCCD by \$2.4 million. Cutting resources to community colleges who supply the trained work force of tomorrow does not seem to be the way to rev up the state's economic engine.

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