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OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

DANIEL M. DOOLEY
Senior Vice President – External Relations

Office of State Governmental Relations
1130 K Street, Suite 340
Sacramento, California 95814
(916) 445-9924
Steve Juarez, Associate Vice President and Director

March 28, 2013

The Honorable Carol Liu
Chair, Senate Education Committee
State Capitol Building, Room 2083
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 495 (Yee), as Introduced, February 21, 2013
Scheduled for hearing in the Senate Education Committee on April 3, 2013
Position: OPPOSE

Dear Senator Liu:

I regret to inform you that the University of California (UC) opposes SB 495. SB 495 requests UC to increase the compensation of campus student health center physicians if the compensation of physicians employed at a different campus is increased. The bill also requires the California State University (CSU) to increase the compensation of physicians employed at campus student health centers until it is comparable to the compensation earned by student health center physicians employed at UC.

It is unclear to the University why legislation is needed to regulate the compensation of this particular group of employees or how this legislation would improve the health care and wellness services that students, faculty and staff receive at a campus health center. Instead, SB 495 would likely increase the costs of providing care without providing any additional benefits to those who pay for it.

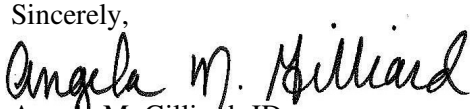
UC campus health centers provide comprehensive medical, mental health and health promotion services to all UC students and a variety of occupational and other health services to faculty and staff. The campus health center services are specifically designed to meet the healthcare needs of students and services are designed to minimize the impact of illness, emotional distress and injury on academic studies and work. Students can use the medical services just as they would their regular doctor's office and urgent care centers.

SB 495 fails to differentiate between the many types of physicians who provide health care services at campus health centers. Many campus student health center career physicians are board-certified in internal medicine or family practice. However, the centers also employ gynecologists, psychiatrists, dermatologists, sports medicine specialists, orthopedists and others to meet the health care needs of the patients they serve. This bill appears to request the University to ignore differences in qualifications, specialties, and the length of experience a physician may have in treating patients when determining compensation levels.

UC competes in many labor markets for qualified personnel, including with other health care providers in the state. Physician compensation varies regionally both throughout the state and across the nation. A number of factors attribute to regional differences in physician compensation including the supply and demand for primary care and specialty physicians and location desirability. However, because of its broad language, SB 495 would no longer allow UC to take these factors into consideration.

Thank you for your consideration of the University's views. Should you have any questions on the University's position on SB 495, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 445-9924.

Sincerely,



Angela M. Gilliard, JD
Legislative Director

cc: Vice Chair and Members, Senate Education Committee
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