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June 18, 2014

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

RE: AB 2350 (Bonilla), as proposed to be amended
Scheduled for Hearing in the Senate Education Committee on June 25, 2014
Position: SUPPORT

Dear Senator Liu,

The University of California (UC) is pleased to support AB 2350 (Bonilla). This bill seeks to increase the number of women in graduate-level academic programs by raising the awareness of prohibition against pregnancy discrimination and by seeking to protect the rights, under federal Title IX standards, of pregnant graduate students. Specifically, the bill prohibits pregnancy discrimination at postsecondary educational institutions and requires colleges and universities to implement policies to prevent a graduate student who is pregnant or has recently given birth from being unfairly penalized for choosing to take a leave of absence from her graduate studies.

Existing UC policy, in accordance with applicable federal and state law, expressly prohibits discrimination on the basis of pregnancy, as well as, race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental disability, medical condition, ancestry, marital status, age, sexual, citizenship, or service in the uniformed services for all students, faculty, and staff.

New parenthood is a common experience for graduate students and childbirth and parenting can be demanding, especially in the first year. Recognizing this, UC campuses have procedures in place for graduate students to take an approved leave of absence from their studies for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to pregnancy and new parental responsibilities. These procedures are specifically intended to allow a graduate student who is pregnant or has recently given birth to have a temporary interruption of her academic program without penalizing her academic standing in that program and guaranteeing her place in the program while on an approved leave. UC believes that AB 2350 highlights the important protections provided by Title IX and ensures the equitable treatment of students who choose to start a family while pursuing a graduate education.

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On behalf of the University, we would like to thank you for your consideration of our views and Assembly Member Bonilla for her leadership in addressing this important issue. Should you have any questions on UC's position on AB 2350, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 445-5584.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nadia Leal-Carrillo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nadia" being the most prominent part.

Nadia Leal-Carrillo
Legislative Director

cc: Assembly Member Bonilla
Members, Senate Education Committee
President Janet Napolitano
Provost and Executive Vice President Aimée Dorr
Senior Vice President Daniel Dooley
Associate Vice President and Director Steve Juarez