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ASSEMBLY FLOOR ALERT
AB 970 (Fong) – File # 31

June 29, 2011

To: Members of the California State Assembly

Re: AB 970 (Fong), as amended on June 3, 2011
POSITION: OPPOSE

The University of California (UC) opposes AB 970 by Assemblyman Paul Fong. AB 970 will not serve to protect students and their families, and it poses a substantial risk to the quality of a University of California education.

The University recognizes the challenges that students and families face in paying for the cost of education and is working diligently to provide students stability and predictability with regard to fees. However, without a guarantee of continued state funding levels, the University will be unable to comply with the requirements of AB 970, as follows:

- The fee consultation, action, and notification period would ultimately require nearly a year to implement a fee increase – an untenable situation given the state’s constantly changing budgetary situation. With last-minute budget decisions affecting the level of State funding, the University must be able to respond quickly to ensure that students have access to classes and that the quality of University education is preserved.
- Adjustments to mandatory tuition are made in conjunction with an assumption about levels of state support. Without a broader plan to develop a stable and predictable program of state support, requiring a predictable, stable and manageable tuition program is illusory.
- The Regents voted at their November 2010 meeting to change the name of the “Educational Fee” to “Tuition”. The change was made after consultation with stakeholders and student groups, with the intent that we recognize that what students pay is actually going toward the cost of instruction and is not incidental to the overall cost of education. The switch to the term “tuition” represents “truth in advertising” while a move back to designating this support as “fees” misrepresents their actual use and purpose.

UC urges a NO vote. For the reasons listed above, we ask you for your “NO” vote on AB 970. The UC remains committed to providing the excellent education students and their families have come to expect. Despite the challenges UC has faced in recent years – including being forced to increase student fees and reduce costs significantly due to deep cuts in state support for the University’s budget — the University has remained financially accessible to students at all income levels. If you have questions about the UC’s position on this bill, please contact Nadia Leal-Carrillo at 916-445-9924.

VOTE “NO” on AB 970