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Steve Juarez, Associate Vice President and Director

April 16, 2015

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

RE: SB 634 (Block), as amended April 8, 2015
Scheduled for hearing April 22, 2015 in the Senate Education Committee
Position: SUPPORT

Dear Senator Liu:

The University of California (UC) is pleased to support SB 634, which would authorize California to enter into an interstate reciprocity agreement for purposes of oversight of postsecondary educational institutions offering postsecondary education in states in which they maintain no physical presence. The State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA), which is the agreement California would be entering into, is an existing voluntary agreement among its member states and U.S. territories that establishes comparable national standards for interstate offering of postsecondary distance-education courses and programs.

SB 634 would benefit the state of California and its higher education institutions in several ways. State entrance into the agreement authorized by SB 634 would allow California residents to experience expanded access to educational opportunities, along with improved consumer protections. Currently there is no such structure in California to monitor the online offerings of out of state institutions.

UC and other California higher education institutions currently expend significant staff resources and pay multiple fees to individual states in order to be eligible to provide online education in those states. In some cases, each academic program has to register and pay fees. In other cases, each UC campus is required to register. The provisions of SB 634 will save significant resources at UC and other California campuses and allow them to expand their distance education offerings in other states. By joining SARA through the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), institutions would only have to register once and to pay one fee to WICHE, to administer the agreement.

We look forward to working with our fellow higher education institutions and others to further ensure this legislation will result in benefits for the state of California and its residents by opening

this avenue for higher education to participate in SARA. We understand the expansion of online education in its public colleges and universities is a state priority, and participation in SARA would support the continued development and improvement of California online higher education by removing existing barriers in other participating states.

Thank you for your consideration of the University's views. Should you have any questions on the University's position on SB 634, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 445-9924.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nadia Leal-Carrillo". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Nadia Leal-Carrillo
Legislative Director

cc: Senator Block
Members of the Senate Education Committee
President Janet Napolitano
Provost and Executive Vice President Aimée Dorr
Executive Vice President & CFO Nathan Brostrom
Senior Vice President Nelson Peacock