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Kieran Flaherty, Associate Vice President & Director

March 26, 2018

The Honorable Jose Medina
Chair, Assembly Higher Education Committee
1020 N Street, Room 173
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2248 (McCarty), as amended on March 23rd, 2018
Scheduled to be heard in the Assembly Higher Education Committee on April 3rd, 2018
Position: OPPOSE

Dear Chair Medina:

The University of California (UC) must respectfully oppose AB 2248. This legislation would change the definition of “full-time” for purposes of determining Cal Grant eligibility from 24 units per academic year, to 30 units per academic year (or the equivalent).

The University of California enrolls more low-income students and has a higher four-year graduation rate than other comparable public universities. This legislation would unfairly disadvantage a majority of UC students who receive the Cal Grant while likely not improving graduation rates.

During the 2016-17 academic year, there were over 67,000 students at UC who received a Cal Grant A or B. Of those Cal Grant recipients, only 42% took 30 or more units or the equivalent. If this bill were to be fully implemented, roughly 58% of Cal Grant recipients at UC would see their Cal Grants reduced, thus creating a significant gap in financial aid packages for UC’s undergraduate financial aid recipients.

A requirement that Cal Grant recipients take a higher unit load per academic year would unfairly apply to only our most financially needy students. Students without financial aid, including many middle and all higher-income students, would not be penalized for taking less than a 30-unit load per academic year while financially needy students would be. We believe that this bill would further impose significant challenges on our first-generation college students, transfer students, and students who are historically underrepresented in public higher education. For these reasons, UC must oppose AB 2248.

On behalf of the University, we would like to thank you for your consideration of our views on this proposal. Should you have any questions about the University's position on this bill, do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 445-5579.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tyler Aguilar". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "T".

Tyler Aguilar
Legislative Director

cc: Vice Chair and Members, Assembly Higher Education Committee
Assembly Member Kevin McCarty
President Janet Napolitano
Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Rachael Nava
Associate Vice President and Director Kieran Flaherty