June 11, 2025

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

Subject: **Senate Bill 790 (Cabaldon) – Postsecondary education: postsecondary education coordinating entity: interstate reciprocity agreements for distance education: out-of-state private postsecondary educational institutions (as amended May 6, 2025)**
Position: Support

Dear Assemblymember Fong:

On behalf of the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU), I am writing to express our strong support for Senate Bill 790, which seeks to authorize California's participation in interstate reciprocity agreements for distance education. This legislation represents a significant advancement in expanding access to quality higher education for students across our state and beyond.

AICCU serves as the unified statewide voice for over 85 of California's independent, nonprofit, WASC-accredited colleges and universities. As you know, our colleges and universities are integral to the state's higher education landscape, providing diverse educational opportunities and contributing significantly to California's workforce and economy.

California's lack of participation in interstate reciprocity for distance education creates significant burdens and barriers. Currently, if an institution wishes to offer an online academic program in another state, it must submit extensive paperwork, pay thousands of dollars in fees, respond to sometimes lengthy questionnaires and supplemental requests for information. This process must currently be completed for any program an institution wants to offer outside California and must be completed for every state in which they want to offer it. Additionally, if a student enrolled in a program moves from California elsewhere, that institution must then determine whether they are authorized to offer distance education in the student's new state, and if not, they must either choose to go through this process and pay thousands in fees to continue educating that student or disenroll the student.

The implementation of SB 790 will facilitate a more streamlined process for our institutions to offer distance education programs to out-of-state students by participating in interstate reciprocity agreements. This will reduce redundant regulatory burdens, allowing our member institutions to allocate resources more effectively toward enhancing educational quality and student support services.

Moreover, it will simplify the ability of institutions to continue serving students who move outside the state and will broaden educational access to students seeking high-quality programs across the country. By creating a pathway for California to streamline this process, the state can expand the opportunities for California's colleges and universities, public and private nonprofit alike, to compete in the national marketplace and offer their programs to more students. This provides an opportunity to help supplement and increase enrollment at California's institutions of higher education, which will help fuel program and faculty growth.

Importantly, SB 790 maintains California's strong commitment to consumer protections in higher education. The bill ensures that participating institutions adhere to stringent standards that safeguard student interests, uphold academic integrity, and provide mechanisms for addressing student complaints. Recent amendments also provide legislative policy committees an opportunity to review the agreement and for the public to provide testimony. By balancing the facilitation of interstate educational opportunities with robust consumer protections, this legislation exemplifies a thoughtful approach to modernizing higher education policy.

We commend the committee's attention to this critical issue and respectfully urge your support for SB 790. Its passage will not only enhance the capacity of California's independent colleges and universities to serve a diverse student population but also reinforce the state's leadership in fostering innovative and accessible higher education solutions.

Thank you for considering our perspective. Please feel free to contact me at alex.graves@aiccu.edu should you have any questions or require further information.

Sincerely,



Alex Graves
Vice President for Government Relations