AICCU
ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT CALIFORNIA COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

September 16, 2025

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor of California
1021 O Street, Room 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

VIA: leg.unit@gov.ca.gov

RE: AB 1098 (Fong): California Education Interagency Council
REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU), I write in strong support of Assembly Bill 1098 by Assemblymember Fong, which combined with Senate Bill 638 (Padilla) establishes a new statewide coordinating entity to strengthen alignment of higher education, career technical education, and workforce development.

AICCU represents over 85 independent, nonprofit, WASC-accredited colleges and universities across California. Our institutions are a vital part of the state's higher education ecosystem, enrolling 21% of undergraduate degree-seeking students and 54% of California students pursuing graduate degrees. We are proud to provide diverse learning environments that play a critical role in preparing the skilled and professional workforce that fuels the state's economy.

As a member of the Governor's Council for Career Education, and prior to that the Governor's Council for Postsecondary Education, AICCU strongly supports the Council's stated goal of aligning education and workforce strategies to meet the state's economic and equity needs. With projections showing that 40% of California jobs will require at least a bachelor's degree by 2030—and another third will require some college education—we must expand and align our education and workforce strategies. Our sector is eager to contribute in meaningful ways to this effort.

In recent years, California has been the only state in the country that lacks a higher education coordinating entity. In its absence, we have witnessed a piecemeal legislative approach to addressing degree offerings, regional workforce needs, and intersegmental partnerships. We strongly support the stated purpose of the California Education Interagency Council because it provides a clear charge to integrate and align efforts between educational segments and employers, both statewide and regionally. With campuses throughout the state—from Redding to San Diego, as well as robust online offerings—our institutions are deeply embedded in their communities and are well-positioned to help meet regional and industry-specific workforce needs.

We commend Assemblymember Fong and his colleagues for their thoughtful approach and respectfully request that you sign AB 1098 into law.

If you have any questions, please contact Vice President for Government Relations, Alex Graves (alex.graves@aiccu.edu).

Sincerely,



Kristen F. Soares
President, AICCU

cc: Nichole Munoz-Murillo, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Governor Gavin Newsom
Office of Assemblymember Mike Fong