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: SB 638 (Padilla): California Education Interagency Council: California Career Technical Education Incentive Grant Program
REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU), I write in strong support of Senate Bill 638 by Senator Padilla, which combined with Assembly Bill 1098 (Fong) 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.

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. For example:

- With over **40 schools of education**, we support California's K-12 system and help meet the needs of school districts. In 2022-23, we awarded 39% of the new educator credentials in the state.

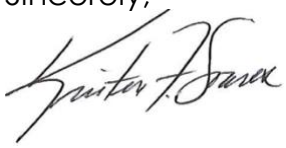
- With over 25 nursing programs, we train over **50% of the state's nurses** with baccalaureate or higher-level degrees, and many of our institutions offer accelerated RN to BSN partnerships with our community colleges.
- We educate **90% of California's clinical, counseling, and applied psychology professionals**, contributing significantly to the state's mental health workforce.

As we know, an increasing number of students now take nontraditional journeys to and through higher education. The Career Technical Education Incentive Grant Program is an important investment that supports students in their preparation for both higher education and employment opportunities. This program, along with the California Education Interagency Council, will help improve preparation for students while also increasing efficiencies and collaboration between postsecondary education systems and employers. Collectively, the policies outlined in SB 638 and AB 1098 will benefit students, communities, and the state.

We commend Senator Padilla and his colleagues for their thoughtful approach and respectfully request that you sign SB 638 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 Senator Steve Padilla