



COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA

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September 14, 2023

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

RE: AB 299 (Holden): Hazing: educational institutions: civil liability: resources
Position: **Request for Veto**

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the Community College League of California, **I respectfully request your veto on Assembly Bill 299 by Assemblymember Chris Holden**, which authorizes civil action against educational institutions for instances of hazing the institution knew or should have known of.

Hazing is a dangerous and horrible practice that no campus community or student should have to face. California's community colleges are the only public higher educational institutions without fraternities and sororities, where hazing commonly takes place. Our student population and campus life are extremely different than that found at four-year institutions, as our colleges often have fewer student organizations and a less robust campus life. Given the stark differences between our colleges and the four-year institutions included in this bill, we strongly believe that community colleges are not the appropriate target for this legislation.

According to the California Community College Chancellor's Office, implementation of this bill would result in **Proposition 98 General Fund costs of \$35.2 million, of which \$22.6 million is ongoing**. As Proposition 98 funded campuses with the lowest per-pupil funding rate in the state, compliance with the suggested measure would take millions of dollars away from urgent student needs. Additionally, the bill's "should have known" standard creates an unreasonable expectation for colleges to have a micro-level involvement within student organizations, further expanding costly liability.

AB 299 (Holden) would unintentionally harm our students, rather than protect them. With increased cost pressures, our colleges are forced to make hard decisions on how to best use their limited resources. If implemented, AB 299 (Holden) would result in fewer dollars for critical campus resources, including resources that ensure students are fed, housed, and supported.

For the above reasons, we respectfully request your veto on AB 299 (Holden). If you or your staff have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 444-8641 or nune@ccleague.org.

Sincerely,

Nune Garipian
Senior Policy Advocate
Community College League of California