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***PRESS RELEASE***

LOS ANGELES AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE CELEBRATES IMPORTANT EDUCATION VICTORIES WITH NEW STATE INVESTMENTS

LOS ANGELES, CA — The Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce celebrated important victories for education today after Gov. Jerry Brown signed the State budget, which includes targeted investments for early care and education, career technical education (CTE), smart justice and increased access to postsecondary education for Californians.

The L.A. Area Chamber advocated strongly for investments in early childhood education resulting in a statewide and federal appropriation of $1 billion, investments for CTE yielding a statewide appropriation of $314 million and a $37.3 million investment for youth diversion and rehabilitation.

“Gov. Brown’s final budget builds on his legacy of prioritizing funding for K-12 schools serving our neediest students by proposing more money for early childhood education, workforce development and improved access and success for post-secondary students. All of these efforts are directly in line with the Chamber’s education initiatives,” said Gary Toebben, L.A. Area Chamber President & CEO. “The Governor’s budget makes clear that investments in California’s future workforce are paramount to driving the State's economic growth and prosperity, and we could not agree more.”

In particular, the Chamber applauds the consensus of the Governor and the legislature on the California Community Colleges Student-Focused Funding Formula, which will change how the State funds community colleges from the current enrollment-based model, to one that takes into account the success of students in completing their educational goals. Under this model, colleges that serve low-income students will also receive more resources to support their students to completion. This outcomes-based formula reflects a long-standing Chamber priority...
to utilize funding incentives to improve student retention and the completion of degrees, credentials and transfer requirements.

The budget also includes funding to create the community colleges’ 115th college and to expand Cal Grant access for California foster youth. The fully online community college campus will be geared toward meeting the needs of working adult learners. The additional funding for the Cal Grant program will enable former foster youth to claim a Cal Grant up until age 26, and to renew an award for up to eight years of college enrollment. These investments will ensure non-traditional students in our region are obtaining the credentials that will allow them to access economic and social mobility.

Additionally, the budget contains investments in youth development and diversion focusing on creating and expanding trauma informed, developmentally appropriate and culturally relevant programs. These programs will provide alternatives to incarceration for youth. It also prioritizes funding for social work positions inside juvenile defender offices. Doing so positions juvenile defenders to utilize a holistic and multidisciplinary approach to better address the root causes of delinquency in the courtroom. These investments will help improve outcomes for vulnerable youth populations, including at-risk Native American youth.

“We commend Gov. Brown, the legislature, California Community Colleges Chancellor Eloy Ortiz Oakley and other key partners for their bold leadership and their willingness to respond to requests for meaningful reforms,” noted Toebben. “Investment in these strategies will help drive a more productive California Community College system and an overall public education system to ensure greater student success.”

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The Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce represents the interests of business in L.A. County. Founded in 1888, the Chamber promotes a prosperous economy and quality of life in the Los Angeles region. For more information, visit www.lachamber.com.