

For Immediate Press Release



PAST LETTERS FROM THE PRESIDENT

MARCH 2, 2004 IS ELECTION DAY IN CALIFORNIA

I am writing on behalf of several thousand university young professional students, faculty and staff, to express my concern regarding the proposed legislative initiative to decrease funding to the California State University Outreach Programs and the "total elimination" of the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP). I am deeply concerned that elimination of services and grants to low-income and educationally disadvantaged students from the traditionally non-college going communities will further widen the social, economic, and educational inequities in California. I strongly urge you and our local government to commit sufficient resources to sustain effective university programs that will "level the playing field" for low-income students and ultimately secure the future prosperity of our state.

The legislative 2004-05 fiscal year budget proposes to cut \$240 million dollars or 9 percent from the California State University system. This will limit access to higher education for approximately 20,000 low-income students. In addition to the \$240 million dollar decrease in funding, the state proposes a \$22.6 million dollar reduction in unallocated funds and \$52 million dollars from university outreach programs. Finally, a \$37 million dollar budget decrease is proposed for the CSU statewide for Educational Opportunity Programs (EOP), administration, and grants.

EOP has created a vision to build a community of support for low-income students. However, if fewer students are admitted to the university system, college participation and voting rates will decrease. More importantly, fewer citizens will enter the workforce to stimulate the economy. We need more jobs to stimulate the economy. However, when our government does not invest in higher education this will ultimately have a negative impact on the state's economic future, especially for low-income students who may never see a university campus.

I am asking you to please join me, concerned students, faculty, staff, and the Coalition of Students, Teachers, and Staff (C.O.S.T.S.) to protect the CSULA budget and Educational Opportunity Program (EOP), which the state is proposing to completely eliminate, and several state grants that provide support for low-income, first generation students.

Jeffery Butler, Ph.D.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jeffrey L. Butler, Ph.D.".

President & CEO
JBEAD Foundation

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