



California Part-Time Faculty Association

Advocate, Educate, Legislate

www.cpfa.org

September 8, 2016

The Honorable Governor Jerry Brown
c/o State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (916) 445-2841

Re: SB 1379 Community Colleges: Part-Time, Contingent Educators

Dear Governor Brown:

As Chair of the California Part-Time Faculty Association (CPFA), I am writing to express CPFA's unqualified support for SB 1379. Tens of thousands of educators working in California's Community College system desperately need your signature on this bill. SB 1379 would provide baseline job security for longstanding part-time faculty who have been exploited as probationary, temporary employees, despite teaching over 50% of community college classes in California. Most importantly, this bill would ensure continuity and stability of part-time faculty assignments, which is proven to translate into greater student success as outlined by SB 1456, the Student Success Act of 2012.

SB 1379 has a straightforward goal: to mandate California's community college districts to negotiate a baseline set of "reemployment preference" rights and retention practices for part-time faculty across the state. California's Education Code (CEC) clearly states, "Part-time faculty *should be* considered to be an integral part of their departments and given all the rights normally afforded to full-time faculty...." (87482.8 & 87482.9) Although this language has been in the code since 2002, the apparent elasticity conferred by the phrase "*should be*" has allowed districts to neglect the state standard, and run roughshod over their part-time faculty in union negotiations.

Unfortunately, the inequitable distribution of privileges within union ranks means these part-time faculty issues cannot be resolved through "local control"; only factions with the greatest influence at the local level would claim it is the best way for addressing such issues. Fourteen years of "local control" has left far too many dependable part-time instructors bereft of any stability of assignment or continuity in their role as educators, negatively impacting quality of education and students. Your signature on SB 1379 is critical if California's part-time community college instructors are to have any rights, which the legislature intended for them over a decade ago. Furthermore, without said rights, academic freedom is a quixotic myth.

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Kindly, consider the following historical analogy as an illustration of the significance of SB 1379. The 14th and 15th Amendments have provided the constitutional basis for voting rights and due process since 1870; yet civil rights activists fought for decades against racist Southern state legislatures to put them into action. The “local control”, i.e. Southern states, had been hijacked by a privileged electorate, and had succeeded in barring African Americans from the voting process. If it were not for President Johnson taking executive action and leading Congress to pass the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1965, Southern states could have continued to discriminate against underprivileged African American citizens. History thus conveys a powerful message: top-down government involvement may be necessary when “local control” fails to adequately protect all citizens according to their rights enumerated in the constitution.

This historical precedent demonstrates the importance of your signature on SB 1379 on behalf of tens of thousands of California educators. Legislators from both houses agree that the state has the power and responsibility to enforce the reasonable measures set out by the CEC.

More significantly, SB 1379 would make tremendous strides in boosting student success. By ensuring continuity and stability of faculty work assignments, SB 1379 means critical support and resources for students, support which is otherwise virtually non-existent. SB 1379 thus links directly to California’s future through the success of tens of thousands of California’s community college students.

Therefore, I urge you to take action to resolve this long neglected injustice. Community College educators and students across the state need your signature on SB 1379.

Sincerely,

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