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AB-1307 Working Families Student Fee Transparency and Accountability Act. (2015-2016)

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Assembly Bill No. 1307

CHAPTER 642

An act to amend Sections 66028.2, 66028.4, and 66028.5 of the Education Code, relating to public postsecondary education.

[Approved by Governor October 08, 2015. Filed with Secretary of State October 08, 2015.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1307, McCarty. Working Families Student Fee Transparency and Accountability Act.

The Donahoe Higher Education Act sets forth the missions and functions of the segments of the higher education system in the state, including the University of California, administered by the Regents of the University of California, and the California State University, administered by the Trustees of the California State University. The provisions of the act apply to the University of California only to the extent that the Regents of the University of California, by appropriate resolution, make them applicable. Under existing law, the regents have all the powers necessary or convenient for the administration of the university, including the power to set mandatory systemwide fees.

Existing law establishes the Working Families Student Fee Transparency and Accountability Act, which suggests policies relating to mandatory systemwide student fees charged and student financial aid for resident students at the University of California and the California State University, including a policy urging the regents and the trustees to ensure that at least 33% of revenues from an increase in fees charged to resident students is set aside for institutional student aid to assist students and families.

This bill would instead urge the regents and trustees to ensure that at least 33% of revenues from an increase in fees charged to undergraduate students is set aside for institutional student aid to assist resident undergraduate students and families, and would make the rest of these policy suggestions requirements, subject to adoption of a resolution by the regents as to the University of California. The bill would change an inaccurate cross-reference in a provision of the Working Families Student Fee Transparency and Accountability Act.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 66028.2 of the Education Code is amended to read:

66028.2. The following requirements apply to student financial aid for resident students, and mandatory systemwide fees charged at the University of California and the California State University:

(a) As any changes in mandatory systemwide fees and financial aid resources are considered, the impact on students shall be explained to students, including, but not limited to, changes to the minimum work or loan burden for all students, if applicable,

institutional financial aid awards, and the average student loan debt for undergraduate students.

(b) Students shall be consulted before increases on mandatory systemwide fees are proposed, so that students can provide input and ask questions regarding the need for any increases in mandatory systemwide fees.

(c) Adequate advance notice shall be provided to students regarding any future mandatory systemwide fees, thereby allowing the students and their families greater time to prepare for the mandatory systemwide fees to be assessed.

(d) In order to ensure that access is not precluded for any eligible student, and particularly for financially needy students, all current and prospective students shall be provided with timely information concerning student financial aid, including the processes associated with applying for and obtaining student financial assistance.

(e) In order for the general public to maintain confidence in the state's public colleges and universities, the state's public colleges and universities shall ensure transparency in the uses of mandatory systemwide fee revenue and the rationale for implementing mandatory systemwide fee increases.

SEC. 2. Section 66028.4 of the Education Code is amended to read:

66028.4. (a) On or before April 2, 2013, the regents and the trustees each shall develop a list of factors that shall be taken into consideration when developing recommendations to adjust mandatory systemwide fees consistent with the policies set forth in this article. The factors shall include, at a minimum, the level of state support, total cost of attendance, impact on various categories of students, including historically underrepresented students and low- to middle-income students, as well as efforts to mitigate the impacts.

(b) The factors, and any subsequent amendments to those factors, shall be developed in consultation with the appropriate statewide student body associations and shall be formally adopted by the regents or the trustees in an open and public meeting.

(c) Nothing in this section shall be construed to exempt any increase in mandatory systemwide fees from the requirements of Section 66028.3.

SEC. 3. Section 66028.5 of the Education Code is amended to read:

66028.5. (a) The regents and the trustees are urged to maintain their commitment to institutional financial aid program funding by ensuring that at least 33 percent of the revenues of an increase to existing mandatory systemwide fees charged to undergraduate students is set aside by the regents or the trustees, as applicable, for institutional student aid to assist resident undergraduate students, including those undergraduate students exempt from nonresident tuition pursuant to Sections 68075.5 and 68130.5, and families in meeting the total cost of education.

(b) The regents and trustees shall report their compliance with this section in their respective annual reports on institutional financial aid pursuant to Section 66021.1.