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**AB-1958 The Community College Student Access, Retention, and Debt Cancellation Program.** (2021-2022)

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Date Published: 10/03/2022 09:00 PM

**Assembly Bill No. 1958**

**CHAPTER 929**

An act to add Article 8 (commencing with Section 78090) to Chapter 1 of Part 48 of Division 7 of Title 3 of the Education Code, relating to community colleges.

[ Approved by Governor September 30, 2022. Filed with Secretary of State September 30, 2022. ]

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

AB 1958, Mike Fong. The Community College Student Access, Retention, and Debt Cancellation Program.

Existing law appropriates \$120,000,000 in the 2021–22 fiscal year to the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, for allocation by the office of the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges, to support efforts to increase student retention rates and enrollment by primarily engaging former community college students who may have withdrawn from a community college due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, current community college students who may be hesitant to remain enrolled at a community college due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and prospective community college students who may be hesitant to enroll at a community college due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Existing law authorizes a community college to use those funds to provide a fiscal incentive for students to reenroll, or for prospective students to enroll, at the community college.

This bill would, contingent upon an appropriation for its purposes, establish the Community College Student Access, Retention, and Debt Cancellation Program for those same purposes, as provided. The bill would additionally authorize community college districts to use funds allocated pursuant to the program to discharge unpaid fees due or owed by a student to a community college in the district and would additionally require the governing board of a community college district to prioritize the use of those funds for community colleges in the district with the largest declines in enrollment due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

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

**SECTION 1.** Article 8 (commencing with Section 78090) is added to Chapter 1 of Part 48 of Division 7 of Title 3 of the Education Code, to read:

**Article 8. The Community College Student Access, Retention, and Debt Cancellation Program**

**78090.** (a) The Community College Student Access, Retention, and Debt Cancellation Program is hereby established.

(b) The Chancellor of the California Community Colleges shall allocate funds on a one-time basis to community college districts to support efforts to increase student retention rates and enrollment by engaging former community college students who may have

withdrawn from a community college district due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, current community college students who may be hesitant to remain enrolled at a community college district due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and prospective students who may be hesitant to enroll at a community college district due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

(c) (1) The governing board of a community college district shall prioritize the use of allocated funds received pursuant to subdivision (b) for community colleges in the district with the largest declines in enrollment due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

(2) A community college district may use funds allocated pursuant to subdivision (b) to provide a fiscal incentive for students to reenroll, or for prospective students to enroll, at the community college.

(3) A community college district may use funds allocated pursuant to subdivision (b) to discharge unpaid fees due or owed by a student to a community college in the district.

(d) In considering the allocation methodology to community college districts, the chancellor shall allocate additional funds to community college districts that have the most significant declines in unduplicated student headcount since Fall 2019.

(e) The chancellor may allocate up to 10 percent of the funds appropriated for purposes of the program to support statewide recruitment and retention efforts.

(f) Implementation of the program established pursuant to this section is contingent upon an appropriation in the annual Budget Act or another statute for its purposes.