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Santa Ana College • Santiago Canyon College

May 15, 2014

The Honorable Marty Block  
California State Senate  
State Capitol, Room 4090  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: SB 850 (Block) Community Colleges: Baccalaureate Degree Pilot Program—Support**

Dear Senator Block,

On behalf of the Rancho Santiago Community College District, I want to express our support of Senate Bill (SB) 850, which authorizes the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, in consultation with the California State University and the University of California, to establish a baccalaureate degree pilot program at up to 15 community college districts.

The pilot program would authorize each participating district to offer one type of baccalaureate degree at one campus within the district in a subject area with an unmet need in the local workforce. The bill would require a district baccalaureate degree pilot program to commence by the beginning of the 2017-18 academic year, and would require a student participating in a baccalaureate degree pilot program to complete his or her degree by the end of the 2022-23 academic year.

Rancho Santiago Community College District is a strong advocate of this important piece of legislation as it will provide more access to programs with unmet workforce needs, while providing more affordable opportunities for students to obtain in-demand degrees. In addition, two-year associate degrees are becoming insufficient for some fields, such as automotive technology and respiratory therapy which have limited bachelor's degree programs in those areas. Expanding community college programs would help students complete a bachelor's degree quickly and efficiently; as a result, students will avoid having to deal with the expense of transferring to another school and the delays of impacted programs.

I thank you for your leadership and extend our support for this important policy as it will authorize an important pilot program that would provide the data necessary for informed decision-making and best-practices implementation.

Sincerely,

Jose Solorio  
President, Board of Trustees

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