IN BRIEF
Modifies the existing SB 850 (Block, 2014) Community College Baccalaureate Degree pilot program by clarifying that students shall begin their degree program by 2022-23 and that the program will become inoperative by July 1, 2026 unless the legislature extends it. Current law requires that a student complete the program by the 2022-2023 academic year essentially stopping enrollment in 2018/2019. SB 1406 provides students, colleges and employers with certainty by clarifying enrollees can start by 2022/23 and graduate by 2026 while the legislature determines how to extend / expand the program when the LAO releases their second report in 2021.

THE ISSUE
22 other states allow community colleges to offer baccalaureate degree programs.

In California, less than 600 students are currently enrolled at the 15 pilot programs throughout the state.

In 2030, if current trends persist, 38 percent of jobs will require at least a bachelor’s degree. But population and education trends suggest that only 33 percent of working-age adults in California will have bachelor’s degrees by 2030—a shortfall of 1.1 million college graduates.

Community colleges account for more than half of undergraduate enrollment in California—open access, wide geographic distribution, and relatively low fees make them especially popular; however, only one in ten community college students transfer to a four-year university.

College completion rates have been improving, but not fast enough. And there will not be enough highly educated newcomers to California—from abroad or from other states—to close the skills gap.

Affordability
Students participating in the community college baccalaureate pilot program pay approximately $10,560 in fees and tuition for their four-year degree. On average, California State University in-state students will pay $27,036 for four years of study.

Technical and trade schools average around $33,000. Private schools cost over $30,000 per year. For example, at Foothill College, where the dental hygiene program is part of the SB 850 pilot, there were only four or five schools in California that offered the degree— all private – and the cost was $40,000 to $60,000 annually. Those are not realistic choices for the majority of community college students. Many community college students have jobs and families; they can't pack up and move and they aren't prepared to go into the kind of debt that would be necessary to enroll in more expensive institutions. Offering these career training courses in the community colleges is less costly for students and the state.

Access
Many Californians don’t live near a CSU or UC. Community colleges are the most accessible option for them. For the majority of the community college baccalaureate degree pilot programs, they are building on successful career technical training programs they’ve already operated for years. By offering degree programs linked with local industries and employers, students have access to good jobs in their community.

EXISTING PILOT PROGRAM
Of the students enrolled in the initial 10 pilot programs statewide, 57 percent are from underserved ethnic groups and 72 percent are female.

Colleges participating in the pilot program include:
1. Antelope Valley College - airframe manufacturing technology (Lackey, Wilk)
2. Bakersfield College - industrial automation (Fong, Fuller)
3. Cypress College - mortuary science (Quirk Silva, Newman)
4. Feather River College - equine industry (Dahle, Gaines)
5. Foothill College - dental hygiene (Berman, Hill)
6. Mesa College - health information management (Maienschein, Weber, Atkins)
7. Mira Costa College – biomanufacturing (Chavez, Bates)
8. Modesto Junior College - respiratory care (Gray, Galgiani)
9. Rio Hondo College - automotive technology (Calderon, Mendoza)
10. Santa Ana College - occupational studies (Daly, Nguyen)
11. Santa Monica College - interaction design (Bloom, Allen)
12. Shasta College - health information management (Dahle, Gaines)
13. Solano Community College - biotechnology (Frazier, Dodd)
14. Skyline College - respiratory care (Mullin, Hill)
15. West Los Angeles College - dental hygiene (Ridley Thomas, Mitchell)

Data from the initial 10 pilot programs:

Female – 148
Male – 58
African American – 12
Asian – 41
Caucasian – 80
Hispanic – 50
Mixed – 12
Other – 11
Age 30 and under – 125
Age 31-50 – 66
Age 50 and over – 15

Colleges have been filing quarterly reports with the Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office with data that is required in the SB 850 bill language. These reports will be expanded to include more data points as the programs reach the one year mark, and as the new programs launch in 2017. Colleges are undergoing accreditation by the ACCJC, and curriculum approved through the CCCCO. The standards are very high to operate the programs.

PPIC STUDY JAN 2017
The Public Policy Institute of California released a report earlier this year (http://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/report/R_117HJR.pdf) which found that, “only 33 percent of working-age adults in California will have bachelor’s degrees by 2030—a shortfall of 1.1 million college graduates.”

“Community colleges account for more than half of undergraduate enrollment in California—open access, wide geographic distribution, and relatively low fees make them especially popular.”

“Many students never transfer to four-year schools. Approximately one in ten community college students transfer to a four-year university.”

PILOT SUNSET IS A PROBLEM
Current law requires that a student complete the program by the 2022-2023 academic year essentially stopping enrollment in 2018/2019. Colleges are working with local high schools and prospective students on recruiting efforts. In addition, colleges are working with local industries to identify incumbent workers who can move into these programs. If current law remains, students will not be able to enroll past 2018/2019 since they won’t be able to complete the program 2022/2023. Students are unlikely to choose programs that have no guarantee of continuing, thus program viability would be in jeopardy.


Under the current provisions, very little student outcome data will be available at the final evaluation date to help ascertain whether the program is effective. This is because colleges would stop admitting students several years ahead of the sunset date to ensure the students can complete their degrees while the program remains authorized. Extending the sunset date, however, would have a major drawback. A longer enrollment period would work to further engrain the program in the status quo, potentially making terminating the pilot more difficult even if the outcome data show that the pilot was ineffective. To allow for a more robust evaluation without entrenching the program for many years, the Legislature simultaneously could permit colleges to continue enrolling new students through the fall 2021 term and move up the final evaluation one year—to 2021 from 2022.

BACKGROUND
On September 28, 2014, California Governor Jerry Brown signed SB 850 (Block) authorizing the Board of Governors of California’s Community Colleges (BOG), in consultation with representatives of the California State University (CSU) and University of California (UC), to establish a statewide baccalaureate degree pilot program at no more than 15 California Colleges. The Board of Governors was charged to develop a process for selection of the pilot programs.

SB 850 contained the following requirements:
Community College Districts were limited to one pilot program offering at one campus within the district.
Community College Districts couldn’t offer a baccalaureate program already offered by a UC or CSU.
Requires the LAO to conduct interim and final evaluations of the pilot program and report to the Legislature and the Governor. The interim evaluation is due July 1, 2018, and the final evaluation is due by July 1, 2022.
The pilot program sunsets on January 1, 2024.

SUPPORT
Association of California Community College Administrators
California Dental Hygienists’ Association
CA Farm Bureau Federation
City of San Jose Fleet Manager
College of the Canyons
Community College League of CA
Del Grande Auto Dealer Group service department
Faculty of De Anza College
Foothill-De Anza Community College District
Foothill College
John Bascom Auto
Kern Community College District
Los Angeles Community College District
Los Rios Community College District
Mesa Vista Hospital
North Orange County Community College District
Peralta Community College District
Redwoods Community College District
Rio Hondo College
San Diego Community College District
San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce
San Diego Unified School District
San Jose Evergreen Community College
Santa Monica College
Snap On Repair Systems
South Orange County Community College District
Synergenics
University of California San Francisco Chancellor’s Leadership Chair in Biochemistry – Science and Education
West Los Angeles College
Yuba Community College District

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