



STATEMENT OF DEBBIE COCHRANE
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Statement on California Governor-Elect Proposal to Deepen Investment in “Free Community College”

“With his first budget, Governor-elect Gavin Newsom is sending a powerful message that investing more in education – from preschool through adulthood – must be a priority for California to retain its economic strength and standing.

“Since 1984 the California community colleges have enabled any student with financial aid to enroll tuition-free, leading the nation with its ‘free college’ program. In 2017, the Legislature passed AB 19, designed to provide new resources to community colleges to support student access and success, by expanding free tuition even further or by investing in student success strategies like advising, tutoring, textbook vouchers, or childcare facilities. Governor-elect Newsom's proposal to invest more in that program, known as the ‘California College Promise,’ will give colleges more desperately needed resources to support their students.

“Free college promises can send a powerful message to all Californians that a college education is within reach. Living up to that promise, however, will require far greater investment in need-based grants and scholarships to help students pay for college costs outside of tuition. Without that investment, California community college students will continue to face [untenable college costs](#) that derail their ability to graduate.”

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An independent, nonprofit organization, The Institute for College Access & Success (TICAS) works to make higher education more available and affordable for people of all backgrounds. Our Project on Student Debt works to increase public understanding of student debt and the implications for our families, economy, and society. For more information see www.ticas.org or follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).