RE: Assembly Bill 1885 (Addis) – STUDENT SUCCESS COMPLETION GRANT PROGRAM
Position: Support

Dear Chair Newman,

As a trusted source of research, design, and advocacy for student-centered policies that promote college affordability and accountability, The Institute for College Access & Success (TICAS) is writing to express our support for Assembly Bill 1885, which expands financial aid access for students with disabilities. TICAS strives to break down financial and opportunity barriers that inhibit students from enrolling or succeeding in institutions of higher education.

The Student Success Completion Grant (SSCG) is currently open to community college students who are enrolled full time, or a minimum of 12 semester units. However, a population of students in Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS) receive special accommodations due to their disability and are classified as full time if they are enrolled in at least 9 units. These students have access to the Cal Grant award, but not the SSCG. This creates a disparity in how we support students with disabilities. The DSPS students with special accommodations should not be shut out of financial aid opportunities that other full-time students have access to.

According to survey data from National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), students with disabilities receive 15% less financial aid than non-disabled students. Under AB 1885, students with disabilities are eligible to receive up to $1,298 per semester through the SSCG. This is a win for our students with disabilities and it will go a long way in covering the cost of college attendance.

We are pleased to support AB 1885 as a first step towards the expansion of the Student Success Completion Grant to all subgroups of students enrolled in a minimum of nine semester units. According to the Public Policy Institute of California, community college students face higher net costs of attendance for higher education compared to the availability of financial aid opportunities. TICAS
prioritizes the growth and expansion of financial aid to all community college students to cover costs beyond just tuition and fees. We invite the Legislature to engage with TICAS subject matter experts on how to build upon this important measure. Please feel free to reach out to me at erodriguez@ticas.org.

We thank you for your leadership on this important issue and respectfully request your support on this measure.

Sincerely,

Emmanuel Rodriguez
Director, Policy and Advocacy
The Institute for College Access and Success

cc: Members of the Senate Education Committee
    Olgalilia Ramirez, Principal Consultant Senate Education Committee
    Assemblymember Dawn Addis