



KAREN BASS
SPEAKER OF THE ASSEMBLY

October 30, 2008

Chancellor Charles B. Reed
The California State University
401 Golden Shore, Suite 641
Long Beach, California 90802-4210

Dear Chancellor Reed,

Today, I met with representatives of UAW 4123 who gave me a copy of a petition signed by a strong majority of the 6,000 academic student employees at the CSU, calling on the University to immediately negotiate a fee waiver benefit. I strongly urge the CSU to negotiate a fee waiver benefit with the UAW when the current agreement between the UAW and the CSU expires.

The lack of a fee waiver for academic student employees has a negative impact on access. Fee hikes disproportionately affect student employees from underrepresented student groups and the students they serve. Despite this valuable contribution to building diversity and access at the CSU, ASEs took a 7% wage cut when fees increased this year. Without a fee waiver, the average ASE only earns \$1.80 an hour after paying fees. Wage cuts are forcing academic student employees to drop out of school, drop classes, and take on second and third off campus jobs just to make ends meet.

I understand that all other unionized CSU employees receive a fee waiver benefit. Academic student employees should not be the only group excluded from this benefit. Student fee hikes are funding a \$111 million increase to the CSU budget this year. This has a severe impact on ASEs. Fee waivers are a benefit for ASEs at universities across the country, including at the University of California.

CSU needs to address the fee waiver issue as soon as possible. Providing the fee waiver benefit now will improve access and diversity at CSU, prevent more ASEs from dropping out and stop ASEs from extending their times-to-degree.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen Bass".

KAREN BASS
SPEAKER OF THE STATE ASSEMBLY

