



for students to return to their studies where they left off – without having to face academic consequences or reapply.

- 2) **Background.** Existing law prohibits a postsecondary education institution from prohibiting a graduate student to take a leave of absence for pregnancy or pregnancy-related issues and also compels a postsecondary education institution to provide reasonable accommodations for such a student. Evidence of these provisions must be contained within written policies posted in various locations on campus and in training for employees. State and federal law also provide several protections against discrimination for students with disabilities, which, pursuant to California Education Code, may include a mental or psychological disorder or condition, such as an emotional or mental illness. However, current law does not explicitly contemplate conditions such as anxiety, depression, eating disorders, and substance use disorders within the definition of mental disorders, nor does it prescribe how a postsecondary education institution must prevent or address discrimination based on a mental illness. This bill requires a postsecondary education institution to adopt a written medical leave of absence policy and provide reasonable accommodations to a student experiencing a mental health-related medical challenge.
- 3) **Related Legislation.** AB 1784 (Pellerin), of the current legislative session, expands reasonable accommodation and nondiscrimination policy provisions to include undergraduate students experiencing pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions and provides for a leave of absence from course work at a postsecondary education institution for both a student who has given birth or a student whose partner has given birth. AB 1784 is pending hearing in this committee.

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