

CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

AB 1829 (Fong)

As Amended June 8, 2026

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Permits California Community Colleges (CCC) to use existing California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Education (CalWORKs) funds, to provide community college students, who receive CalWORKs, with direct aid for basic needs supports and permits CCC to waive employer's wage contributions for workstudy if the number of workstudy positions on – and off – campus remains the same.

Senate Amendments

- 1) Remove the term ongoing prior to basic needs services in the measure and adds a co-author to the measure.

COMMENTS

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. Every year as part of the annual Federal Budget Act, the Federal Government provides a fixed block grant to states, territories, and Washington, DC for the purposes of funding the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. TANF was established in 1996 and was part of a larger welfare reform effort proposed by President Bill Clinton. In 2024, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families Office of Family Assistance, reported \$16.9 billion in funds had been allocated to states and territories for the purpose of fostering economic security and providing stability for families with children who are considered low income. Each state is provided funds in the form of a block grant and is then authorized to provide monthly cash assistance to qualifying families with children. To qualify for the federal funding the State must also provide state funding for services that align with the federal program's overarching goals:

- 1) Provide stability for children to remain in their nuclear family "home" by providing assistance to the family unit;
- 2) Promote job attainment, work attainment, and marriage in order to end the dependence upon government benefits;
- 3) Reduce the incidences of out-of-wedlock pregnancies; and,
- 4) Encourage the formation and strengthen the continuation of two-parent families.

California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs). In California, the TANF program is known as CalWORKs. CalWORKs was created in 1997 to provide California with the ability to administer the newly created TANF program. Just like CalFresh, CalWORKs is administered by county welfare agencies and is overseen by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS). According to the Legislative Analyst Office, California receives \$3.7 billion in TANF funds of which over \$2 billion is given to CalWORKs. In order to remain eligible to receive TANF funds, the State must provide additional state funding for services for CalWORKs recipients, which is known as the Maintenance-of-Effort (MOE). Including the MOE, the state spends roughly \$7.1 billion to provide services for CalWORKs recipients.

To qualify for CalWORKs, a person must meet specific age, income, and citizenship requirements. Technically, both adult caretakers (parents or guardians) and a child may be eligible for CalWORKs if either or both meet the criteria. Even if a person meets the age, income, and citizenship requirements, a person may still be deemed ineligible for CalWORKs. The most common cases for ineligibility are as follows: 1) exceeding the time limit for aid for adults, currently five years of cash assistance; 2) being sanctioned for not meeting some of the program's requirements after receiving cash assistance; and, 3) receiving Supplemental Social Security Income benefits.

CalWORKs Recipients Education Program. The CCC is an equal access higher education institution and accepts 100% of all applicants regardless of previous academic experience. In their ongoing effort to help all students achieve their educational and career goals, the CCC offers a myriad of support services and programs to assist students matriculate to a degree or certificate. One of these programs is the CalWORKs Recipients Education Program (CalWORKs REP).

Established in 1997 as part of the nation's "welfare reform" efforts, CalWORKs REP enables CCC to provide additional services to CalWORKs recipients who are also enrolled in CCC coursework. The CalWORKs REP provides funding to the CCC for two purposes: 1) to help CalWORKs recipients with vital services to assist them find employment, and 2) to develop curriculum specifically to help CalWORKs recipients obtain the skills necessary for job attainment. Services include workstudy, childcare, job development and placement, and case management and counseling. In the 2025-2026 budget year, the CCC received \$8 million in TANF funds and \$56.922 million in Proposition 98 funds for services provided as part of the CalWORKs REP. In 2023-2024, the CCC provided support services to 22,979 CalWORKs students and provided the following services:

- 1) 69 received childcare through on-campus services;
- 2) 1,197 received childcare through off-campus services; and,
- 3) 1,222 participated in workstudy.

According to the Legislative Analyst Office, the CalWORKs student services program has received a cost-of-living adjustment every year since 2020-2021 in the annual State Budget Act; whereas, Student Basic Needs Centers have only received a cost-of-living adjustment once. In a time of fiscal uncertainty at both the State and Federal level, it is imperative for California to look at existing programs and expand, where possible, the use of the funds to best serve and support students. This measure is a reasonable as it expands an existing program to include basic needs services to those students who are most in need. The measure would also provide a cost-break to employers who wish to provide students with work experience without incurring the cost of providing a wage to the student for services rendered through the CalWORKs workstudy.

According to the Author

As stated by the author, "many student parents are forced to choose between meeting their family basic needs and pursuing their academic goals. Often, these students face significant barriers, including the rising cost of necessities, childcare responsibilities, and limited employment opportunities. AB 1829 provides community colleges with greater flexibility to support CalWORKs REP students financially, academically, and professionally."

Arguments in Support

As the sponsors of the measure, the Chancellor's Office of the CCC supports the measure as, "the bill removes outdated restrictions that limit the use of program resources and clarifies that colleges may expand access to program supports and activities that help students succeed academically and enter the workforce. These changes will allow colleges to more effectively provide educational supports, strengthen coordination with county partners, and expand experiential and work-based learning opportunities for CalWORKs participants. By modernizing the statutory framework for the CalWORKs Education Program, AB 1829 will help colleges direct resources where they are most needed and ensure low-income parenting students have access to the services and experiences that support college completion and long-term economic mobility."

Arguments in Opposition

None on file.

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Senate Committee on Appropriations, the Chancellor's Office indicates that CalWORKs at community colleges throughout the state have accumulated significant funds in the low tens of millions of dollars statewide due to restrictions under current law. This bill would allow them to use these Proposition 98 funds on existing CalWORKs REP students for direct aid to meet basic needs services and resources. However, this could potentially lead to future, unknown cost pressures to the extent that program funds become fully subscribed.

VOTES:**ASM HIGHER EDUCATION: 8-1-1**

YES: Fong, Boerner, Jeff Gonzalez, Jackson, Kalra, Patel, Sharp-Collins, Tangipa

NO: DeMaio

ABS, ABST OR NV: Muratsuchi

ASM HUMAN SERVICES: 7-0-0

YES: Lee, Castillo, Calderon, Elhawary, Jackson, Solache, Tangipa

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 14-0-1

YES: Wicks, Hoover, Arambula, Calderon, Caloza, Dixon, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

ABS, ABST OR NV: Muratsuchi

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 71-1-8

YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Ramos, Ransom, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NO: DeMaio

ABS, ABST OR NV: Arambula, Flora, Lowenthal, Quirk-Silva, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Solache, Soria

SENATE FLOOR: 39-0-1

YES: Allen, Alvarado-Gil, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Choi, Cortese, Dahle, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Grove, Hurtado, Jones, Laird, Limón, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Niello, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla, Pérez, Richardson, Rubio, Seyarto, Smallwood-Cuevas, Stern, Strickland, Umberg, Valladares, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener

ABS, ABST OR NV: Reyes

UPDATED

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