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## SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Anna Caballero, Chair  
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

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### **AB 662 (Alvarez) - Postsecondary education: mixed-use intersegmental educational facility in the City of Chula Vista: South County Higher Education Planning Task Force**

**Version:** May 1, 2025

**Urgency:** No

**Hearing Date:** August 18, 2025

**Policy Vote:** ED. 7 - 0

**Mandate:** Yes

**Consultant:** Lenin Del Castillo

**Bill Summary:** This bill establishes the South County Higher Education Planning Task Force to evaluate the feasibility of establishing a mixed-use intersegmental educational facility in the City of Chula Vista.

**Fiscal Impact:** The University of California (UC), the California State University, and the Chancellor's Office indicate that the cost for the segments to participate in the Task Force would be minor and absorbable within existing resources. However, the findings and recommendations of the Task Force could lead to General Fund cost pressures for the state to establish a mixed-use intersegmental educational facility in Chula Vista. The construction of such a facility will likely require a significant one-time capital investment, potentially in the hundreds of millions of dollars, depending on the scope of the project. Further, the facility would have additional, ongoing operating costs of an unknown magnitude.

**Background:** Existing law establishes the CSU, under the administration of the Trustees of the CSU, as one of the segments of public postsecondary education in the state. The CSU currently comprises 23 institutions of higher education.

Existing law, under Section 9, Article IX of the State Constitution creates the UC to be administered by the Regents with full powers of organization and government, subject only to such legislative control as may be necessary to ensure security of its funds, compliance with the terms of its endowments, statutory requirements around competitive bidding and contracts, sales of property and the purchase of materials, goods and services.

Existing law establishes the California Community Colleges under the administration of the Board of Governors of the CCC, as one of the segments of public postsecondary education in this state.

**Proposed Law:** This bill establishes, until January 1, 2031, the South County Higher Education Planning Task Force for evaluating the feasibility of establishing a mixed-use intersegmental educational facility in the City of Chula Vista. The bill specifies the Task Force's membership, including at least one representative from San Diego State University appointed by the CSU Chancellor, at least one representative from Southwestern College appointed by the CCC Chancellor, at least one representative from UC San Diego, appointed by the UC President, and at least one representative from the City of Chula Vista. The bill requires that the chair of the Task Force be voted

on by a majority of the Task Force members, and that Task Force members be South County residents or individuals who work or have a stake in the area.

This bill requires that the Task Force do at least all of the following:

1. Identify and recommend potential governance structures for the mixed-use intersegmental educational facility, including, but not limited to, consortia and other collaborative models.
2. Identify and analyze potential site locations and infrastructure requirements.
3. Identify and recommend potential funding mechanisms, resources, and partnerships for the mixed-use intersegmental educational facility.
4. Identify any statutory barriers to the development recommendations and recommend any statutory changes necessary for establishing the mixed-use intersegmental educational facility.
5. Conduct public engagement activities for purposes of gathering regional input.
6. Convene its first meeting by July 1, 2026.
7. Submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature by July 1, 2027.

This bill allows the Task Force to request and receive, but not require, information from the CCC Board of Governors and the CCC Chancellor, the California Department of Education, any community college district, any local educational agency, the CSU Chancellor, the UC President, or any organization representing independent institutions of higher education. It also makes the Task Force subject to the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act.

**Related Legislation:** SB 1023 (Wilk, 2024) would have authorized the CSU Chancellor to study the feasibility of a CSU satellite program and an independent CSU campus in the Antelope Valley or the Victor Valley. This bill was held on the Suspense File in this Committee.

AB 2357 (Bains, Chapter 959, Statutes of 2024) established the University of California Kern County Medical Education Endowment Fund for the purpose of supporting the operating costs associated with establishing a branch campus of an existing UC Medical School in Kern County.

AB 24 (Block, 2009) would have required the Chancellor of the CSU to conduct a feasibility study regarding the establishment of a CSU satellite program and independent campus at Chula Vista. The bill was vetoed with the following message:

***Nothing under current law prohibits the California State University (CSU) or any other entity to conduct a study regarding the feasibility of establishing another CSU campus in Chula Vista. I appreciate the author's intention to plan for options for the future, and to ensure that any study would be***

***funded with non-State General Fund dollars. I encourage the author to work with the CSU system, local and regional entities, and all other stakeholder groups to see if this objective is viable. However, a state law mandating such a study is unnecessary.***

**Staff Comments:** The city of Chula Vista is located in the San Diego County and is the second largest city in the county. In 2023, the Chula Vista Mayor, Assemblymember Alvarez, and Southwestern College Board President signed an agreement to signal their commitment to bringing at least one university to Chula Vista. According to the author, “AB 662 aims to address long-standing educational inequities in South San Diego County by exploring the creation of a mixed-use, intersegmental higher education institution in Chula Vista—the largest city in California without a public university offering four-year degrees. With nearly 600,000 residents in a region often called a ‘college desert,’ many—especially low-income, first-generation, and underrepresented students—face barriers to higher education due to distance, cost, and limited access.”

This bill establishes a Task Force to be comprised of various representatives across the higher education and K-12 public education segments, including the San Diego State University, Southwestern Community College, and the Sweetwater Union High School District, to determine the feasibility for a mixed-use intersegmental educational facility. While the bill would not result in direct state costs on the front end, it could create substantial cost pressures for the state for the possible creation of an intersegmental educational facility in Chula Vista.

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