

Date of Hearing: January 22, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

AB 713 (Solache) – As Amended January 5, 2026

Policy Committee: Higher Education

Vote: 6 - 3

Urgency: No

State Mandated Local Program: Yes

Reimbursable: Yes

SUMMARY:

This bill, beginning January 6, 2027, prohibits the University of California (UC), California State University (CSU), or California Community Colleges (CCC) from disqualifying a student for employment based on a failure to provide proof of federal work authorization, unless proof is required by federal law or proof is required as a condition of a grant funding the position the student has applied for.

FISCAL EFFECT:

- 1) Significant General Fund cost exposure, potentially in the tens of millions to hundreds of millions of dollars, to the extent this bill results in litigation and a legal judgement implicating one or all of California's public colleges and universities regarding federal work authorization requirements.
- 2) One-time Proposition 98 General Fund costs likely between \$936,000 and \$1.6 million for 72 community college districts to update policies and procedures regarding the hiring of undocumented workers and ensure compliance with other state and federal laws.
- 3) One-time General Fund costs likely in the hundreds of thousands to low millions of dollars for the UC Office of the President, CSU Chancellor's Office, and Community Colleges Chancellor's Office to develop regulations and issue guidance and for individual UC and CSU campuses to update policies and procedures.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

The federal Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (ICRA) does not explicitly state that it governs a state's own hiring practices when acting as an employer. Nevertheless, without explicit statutory direction, California's higher education systems have continued to deny employment opportunities to undocumented students out of legal caution. Legislative action is therefore necessary to clarify state authority, ensure consistency across segments, and align campus employment practices with California's broader higher education and equity policies.

- 2) **Background.** According to the California Undocumented Higher Education Coalition, there are over 82,000 undocumented students enrolled in colleges and universities in California, many of whom do not qualify for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status and are thereby prohibited from legal employment. Further, according to Immigrants Rising, co-sponsors of this bill, a recent California Court of Appeals ruling, which the California Supreme Court upheld, deemed the UC's prior policy of barring undocumented immigrants from accessing on-campus jobs and paid research positions as discriminatory and in violation of state law. Therefore, proponents of this bill argue this bill, by prohibiting public colleges and universities from disqualifying a student from employment based upon a lack of proof of federal work authorization, would provide undocumented immigrants with opportunities to better support themselves financially as they pursue higher education, provide them career skills, and aid them in pursuing a career post-graduation. However, federal law may still compel colleges and universities to disqualify students without federal work authorization from employment, regardless of state policy.
- 3) **Prior Legislation.** AB 2586 (Alvarez), of the 2023-2024 legislative session, was identical to this bill, but with an implementation date of January 6, 2025. The bill was vetoed by Governor Newsom, who cited concerns of potential criminal and civil liability for state employees who no longer disqualify students from employment for failing to provide valid federal work authorization.

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