
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No: ACA 18 **Hearing Date:** June 3, 2026
Author: Caloza
Version: April 29, 2026
Urgency: **Fiscal:** Yes
Consultant: Olgalilia Ramirez

Subject: University of California: regents: student members.

NOTE: This measure has been referred to the Committees on Education and *Elections and Constitutional Amendments*. A “do pass” motion should include referral to the *Elections and Constitutional Amendments* Committee.

SUMMARY

This measure proposes to modify Article IX of the State Constitution to require, rather than authorize, the members of the University of California (UC) Board of Regents to appoint four students enrolled at a UC campus to the Board of Regents.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) The California Constitution establishes the UC, a public trust to be administered by the Regents of the UC and grants the Regents full powers of organization and government, subject only to such legislative control as may be necessary to insure 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. (Article IX, Section (9)(a) of the California Constitution)
- 2) The California Constitution establishes the requirements for appointment and terms to be served by a member of the Regents of the UC. The Constitution specifically requires that members of the board be composed of 7 ex officio members of which include; the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the Assembly, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the president and the vice president of the alumni association of the university, and the acting president of the university, and 18 appointive members. The Constitution also provides that the Senate, a majority of the membership concurring, approve any Regent appointee made by the Governor. (Article IX, Section (9)(a) and (b)(1) of the California Constitution)
- 3) The California Constitution authorizes the UC Regents to appoint students or faculty and establishes procedures for their appointment. Specifically, it authorizes the members of the board to appoint either a member of the faculty at a campus of the university or of another institution of higher education, or a person enrolled as a student at a campus of the university, or both, as members

of the board serving for no less than one year with all rights of participation. The Constitution also provides that the board appointed student or faculty member serve for not less than one year commencing on July 1. (Article IX, Section (9)(c) of the California Constitution)

ANALYSIS

This constitutional amendment proposes to place before the voters a change to the California Constitution to modify the membership of the Board of Regents of the UC. Specifically, it:

- 1) Requires, rather than authorizes, the UC Regents, beginning on July 1, 2027, to consult annually with the student representatives including University of California Student Association (UCSA) and the University of California Graduate and Professional Council, or their successor organizations, respectively, to appoint to the board four UC students to serve as members of the board with all powers, duties, voting authority, rights, and responsibilities as regular members of the board. The students are to be appointed as follows:
 - a) One undergraduate student appointed in an even numbered year is to serve a term of two years. The first year, the undergraduate student is to serve as the student Regent-designee with nonvoting authority, and in the second year, the undergraduate student is to serve as student Regent with full voting authority.
 - b) One undergraduate student appointed in an odd numbered year is to serve a term of two years. The first year, the undergraduate student is to serve as the student Regent-designee with no voting authority, and in the second year, the undergraduate student is to serve as student Regent with full voting authority.
 - c) One graduate student appointed in an even numbered year is to serve a term of two years. The first year, the graduate student is to serve as the student Regent-designee with no voting authority, and in the second year, the graduate student is to serve as the student Regent with full voting authority.
 - d) One graduate student appointed in an odd numbered year is to serve a term of two years. The first year, the graduate student is to serve as the student Regent-designee with no voting authority, and in the second year, the graduate student is to serve as the student Regent with full voting authority.
 - e) Provides that a student Regent who is authorized to serve as a Regent who graduates on or after January 1 in the second year of student's two year term can continue to serve for the remainder of the student's term as Regent.
 - f) Makes other technical and clarifying changes.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) **Need for the bill.** According to the author, “Sixteen years ago, I came to the State Capitol as a UC San Diego student to protest tuition hikes by the UC Regents. Today, students are facing those same challenges—only worse: rising tuition, unaffordable housing, and growing uncertainty that impacts their ability to succeed. Yet on the 26-member UC Board of Regents, only one student has a vote.

“Students deserve more than a seat in the room—they deserve a vote that counts. ACA 18 is about fairness, accountability, and meaningful representation. By expanding student voting power on the UC Board of Regents, we ensure that the voices of those most impacted by decisions on tuition, housing, and student life are heard loud and clear.

“Now more than ever, it’s time to put students first and give them a real say in the decisions that shape their education and future.”

- 2) **Student Regents.** Under the Constitution, the UC Regents have the option of appointing a student to serve as a member of the Board. The student Regent and Regent-designate positions are established and affirmed by regental policy. The two student members of the UC Regents serve staggered two-year terms, with the first year of a student’s membership, known as a regent-designate, limited to participation but not voting. This bill requires the appointment of four student representatives, two with voting privileges. The proposed changes also ensure representation from both the undergraduate and graduate student populations. The author notes that the last time an *undergraduate* student was represented on the UC Regents was in 2021.
- 3) **Student consultation.** Under this measure, appointments are to be made in consultation with student representatives, including UCSA (sponsors of this measure) and the Graduate and Professional Council. UCSA is a systemwide organization composed of representatives from UC student governments that participates in student engagement, policy discussions, and shared governance matters affecting UC students. The Graduate and Professional Council is the equivalent organization for graduate and professional students. This measure identifies UCSA and the Graduate and Professional Council as student representative organizations to be consulted during the selection process but does not prohibit the Regents from seeking input from other student groups. Further, the student Regent serves as an individual member of the Board and is not formally designated as a representative of any particular student organization.
- 4) **Effect on existing Regents.** The California Constitution provides for 18 Regents to be appointed by the Governor and approved by the Senate. In addition, the Constitution affords seven ex officio members, that include publicly elected officials. UC Regents may choose to also appoint a member of the faculty. According to the UC website, two faculty members-- the chair and vice chair of the Academic Council, sit on the Board as non-voting members. This

measure does not change the number of gubernatorial appointees or ex officio members. Instead, it expands student representation by increasing the number of voting student Regents from one to two and nonvoting student Regents from one to two, resulting in a larger board and giving students two votes instead of one in Board decisions. It additionally provides that student Regents serve with the same authority and responsibilities as other Regents.

5) ***Prior and related legislation.***

SCA 5 (Glazer, 2021) would have modified Article IX of the State Constitution to require, rather than authorize, the members of the UC Board of Regents to appoint two students enrolled at a UC campus. SCA 5 died in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

SCA 1 (Lara, 2016) proposed to modify Article IX of the State Constitution to reduce the term of an appointment as a Regent of the UC from 12 years to 10 years for terms commencing on or after the effective date of this measure and prohibits these members from serving more than two terms. SCA 1 was placed on the inactive file on the Senate Floor by the author.

SUPPORT

University of California Student Association (sponsor)

OPPOSITION

None received

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