
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

ACA 18 (Caloza) - University of California: regents: student members

Version: June 9, 2026

Policy Vote: ED. 6 - 0, E. & C.A. 5 - 0

Urgency:

Mandate: No

Hearing Date: June 15, 2026

Consultant: Lenin Del Castillo

Bill Summary: ACA 18, if approved by voters, would modify Article IX of the State Constitution to require, rather than authorize, the University of California (UC) Board of Regents to appoint four students enrolled at a UC campus to the Board of Regents.

Fiscal Impact:

- The UC estimates ongoing General Fund costs of \$172,000 each year for the Board of Regents to add two additional student members. This estimate assumes that the cost of one student Regent, voting or non-voting, is \$86,000 each year which includes expenses associated with tuition, fees, scholarships, room, board, and transportation provided to the student in the form of credits and reimbursements. The UC indicates that it currently pays these costs for both the student voting member and the student non-voting member, therefore the bill would double those costs by creating a total of four required student members.
- This measure would result in one-time General Fund costs to the Secretary of State (SOS) in the range of \$738,000 to \$984,000, likely in 2026-27, for printing and mailing costs to place the measure on the ballot in a statewide election. Actual costs may be higher or lower, depending on the length of required elements and the overall size of the ballot.

Background: 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. The California Constitution also establishes requirements for the appointment and terms to be served by a member of the Regents of the UC. Specifically, it requires that members of the Board be composed of 7 ex officio members—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 provides that the Senate approve any Regent appointee made by the Governor.

The California Constitution authorizes the UC Regents to appoint students or faculty and establishes procedures for their appointment. It authorizes the members of the Board to appoint either a member of the faculty at a university campus 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.

Proposed Law: This bill would place before the voters a change to the California Constitution to modify the membership of the Board of Regents of the UC. Specifically, it requires, rather than authorizes, the UC Regents, beginning on July 1, 2027, to consult annually with the student representatives including, but not limited to, the systemwide student associations designated as official representatives by a majority of undergraduate and graduate student governments, to appoint four UC students to serve as members with all powers, duties, voting authority, rights, and responsibilities as regular members of the Board. Specifically, the bill requires the Board of Regents to appoint two undergraduate and two graduate student members, each serving two-year terms, with one graduate student and one undergraduate student appointed for a total of two student appointees each year in even and odd numbered years. During the first year, each appointee 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.

Related Legislation: SCA 5 (Glazer, 2021) would have required, rather than authorize, members of the UC Board of Regents to appoint two students enrolled at a UC campus. The bill was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

Staff Comments: The California Constitution requires the UC Board of Regents to be composed of 25 voting members—seven ex officio members and 18 members appointed by the Governor and approved by the Senate. The Constitution also authorizes the Board of Regents to appoint either a faculty member or a student enrolled at a UC campus, or both, as voting members of the Board. This bill would expand student representation by increasing the number of voting students from one to two and the number of nonvoting students from one to two.

Additionally, the SOS indicates that printing and mailing costs associated with placing a measure on the statewide ballot are \$123,000 per page, depending on the length of the ballot. The fiscal estimates noted above reflect the addition of 6-8 pages in the Voter Information Guide. Actual costs would depend upon the length of the title and summary, analysis by the LAO, proponent and opponent arguments, and text of the proposal.

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