
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Sasha Renée Pérez, Chair

2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 607	Hearing Date:	January 14, 2026
Author:	Wiener		
Version:	January 5, 2026		
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	No
Consultant:	Olgalilia Ramirez		

Subject: University of California Institutes for Science and and Innovation.

SUMMARY

This bill explicitly authorizes artificial intelligence (AI) as an additional concentration area that may be covered by the existing California Institutes for Science and Innovation established within the University of California (UC).

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Authorizes the UC Regents to establish 4 California Institutes for Science and Innovation at separate campuses of the UC for the purpose of combining technological and scientific research training and educating future scientists and technological leaders.
- 2) Requires that each institute be created through a competitive application process conducted by a panel selected by the Governor and administered by the UC.
- 3) Specifies that each institute develop programs in cooperation with the private sector and with California's other public and independent universities.
- 4) States that the concentration of each institute may include, but is not limited to, any of the following:
 - a) Medicine.
 - b) Bioengineering.
 - c) Telecommunications and information systems.
 - d) Energy resources.
 - e) Space.
 - f) Agricultural technology.

- 5) Makes the state's share of funding for operating and facilities costs for each institute subject to appropriation in the annual Budget Act. (Education Code § 92900)

ANALYSIS

- 1) This bill explicitly adds AI to the list of concentration areas that may be covered by the existing California Institutes for Science and Innovation established within the UC.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) **Need for the bill.** According to the author, "SB 607 adds Artificial Intelligence to the list of enumerated concentrations that the California Institutes of Science and Innovation may focus on. As this technology continues to play a major role in our state's economy, it is important that existing resources are leveraged to ensure California's position as a leader in safe and responsible AI. Since 2001, when the University of California was given funding to establish four California Institutes for Science and Innovation in order to help bridge the gap between research and business, the technology landscape has greatly shifted. Existing law references six areas in which the institutes may concentrate, adding AI best positions California to continue to lead on this technology."
- 2) **California Institutes for Science and Innovation.** AB 2883 (Villaraigosa, Chapter 79, Statutes of 2000) authorized the UC to establish three research institutes to be located on separate UC campuses, partially funded with state funds. A fourth institute was authorized the following year. Existing law allows each institute to focus on a range of concentration areas, including medicine, bioengineering, telecommunications and information systems, energy resources, space, and agricultural technology, but does not limit institutes to these areas, and they may pursue other topics without additional legislation. These multidisciplinary research centers are structured in partnership with industry to promote business growth in the state, serve as training grounds for student researchers, and future business leaders. All four institutes utilize the research capabilities of multiple UC campuses. The institutes include the Center for Information Technology Research in the Interest of Society, the California Nanosystems Institute, the California Institute for Telecommunications and Information Technology, and the California Institute for Quantitative Biosciences.
- 3) **Artificial Intelligence.** There is growing interest within the Legislature in expanding research on AI to better understand its impacts and to help inform the development of policy. According to the 2025 report, *The California Report on Frontier AI Policy*, AI encompasses a broad range of technologies that aim to replace or supplement human cognitive capabilities. California is home to many of the leading AI companies and research institutions. California has both the capability and responsibility to help ensure these powerful technologies remain safe so that their benefits to society can be realized. AI, as an area of concentration, aligns with the technology emphasis of the other concentration areas outlined in existing law. This bill aims to support research capacity in AI

technology by highlighting it as a potential area of study within these established institutes.

SUPPORT

None received

OPPOSITION

None received

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