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Student Aid Commission to Meet Thursday on Impact of Governor's Budget Proposal to Cut Cal Grants

Rancho Cordova, CA -- The California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) urges policy makers looking for ways to patch the huge hole in the state budget to focus on the long-term consequences of cutting Cal Grant student aid.

"Reducing Cal Grants is like a subsistence farmer eating his seed corn today to avoid going hungry, but as a result limiting his ability to grow future crops," said Barry Keene, CSAC Chair. "When disadvantaged students are denied access to higher education, it limits their future as productive, tax-paying citizens."

The statement came in reaction to the Governor's revised budget proposal, which proposes "decoupling" of the Cal Grant program award for students attending the University of California and California State University from an amount equal to mandatory system-wide tuition and fees. The new arrangement would limit awards to the same proportion provided through federal Pell Grants.

The Commission will also discuss the impact of the Governor's proposals that restrict Cal Grant participation to institutions that meet a new Graduation Rate Standard as well as lower three-year cohort default rate from the current 30% to 15%.

"Whether motivated high school graduates have their sights on a vocation or a professional career, the licenses, certificates and degrees offered by the higher education system are a critical pathway to better-paying jobs and a more vibrant economy for the State," said Diana Fuentes-Michel, Executive Director of CSAC. "Cutting Cal Grants hurts today's high school students, but also tomorrow's workforce."

CSAC will be meeting on Thursday, May 17 via teleconference and interested parties may listen to the call at 888-677-8152 (Password: Dream; Leader: Gloria Lopez). Public comment is welcomed during public comment periods.