

June 24, 2026

Honorable Lola Smallwood-Cuevas
Senate Labor, Public Employment and Retirement Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 6740
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Re: AB 1818 (Ortega) – California State University: employer-employee relations:
meeting and conferring – SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Smallwood-Cuevas:

On behalf of the Academic Professionals of California (APC), representing more than 3,000 professional staff members across the California State University system, we write to express our strong support for AB 1818 authored by Assemblymember Ortega.

AB 1818 protects the collective bargaining rights of California State University (CSU) employees by addressing a longstanding loophole in the Higher Education Employer-Employee Relations Act (HEERA) that has repeatedly been used by CSU to avoid honoring negotiated salary increases and other contractual commitments.

APC members serve students and campuses every day as counselors, educational opportunity program professionals, academic advisors, student services professionals, residence life coordinators, financial aid professionals, and many other dedicated staff. Our members are often frontline employees who help students navigate admission, retention, graduation, and overall student success. When CSU refuses to honor negotiated agreements, it undermines not only the employees who provide these services but also the students who depend upon them.

For years, CSU has relied upon an outdated provision of HEERA to unilaterally determine whether collective bargaining agreements have been fully funded and to reopen negotiations after agreements have already been reached. This creates instability, erodes trust at the bargaining table, and places employees in the untenable position of having negotiated gains withdrawn after the fact. Such a process would be unacceptable in most labor-management relationships and should not continue within California's public university system.

AB 1818 restores fairness and accountability by ensuring that any determination regarding the funding of negotiated agreements is reviewed through an independent process rather than left solely to CSU's discretion. APC supports the Senate amendments that place this responsibility with the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB), an agency with the

expertise and experience necessary to evaluate collective bargaining disputes and labor relations issues. This approach promotes consistency, avoids duplicative reviews, and ensures that decisions are based upon established labor relations principles.

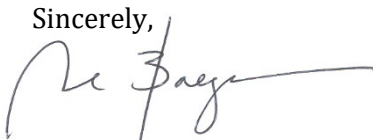
As APC enters bargaining with CSU in the coming years, our members deserve confidence that agreements reached at the table will be honored. Stable labor relations are critical to recruiting and retaining talented professionals who support student success throughout the CSU system. When negotiated agreements can be unilaterally set aside, employee morale suffers, turnover increases, and campuses lose experienced professionals whose work directly impacts students.

AB 1818 represents a commonsense modernization of HEERA. It strengthens the collective bargaining process, promotes labor stability, and helps ensure that agreements negotiated in good faith are treated with the respect they deserve.

For these reasons, the Academic Professionals of California respectfully urges your **AYE** vote on AB 1818.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Mario Baeza

President

Academic Professionals of California (APC)

On behalf of the Academic Professionals of California