



# A DEFINING MOMENT

Community College League of California

March 7, 2011

Dear Andy,

This is it. Votes on the budget package are expected as early as Wednesday, but don't be surprised if we are still [tweeting](#) updates in the middle of the night Thursday or Friday.

As Senate President Pro Tempore Darrell Steinberg said yesterday at the [FACCC](#) Advocacy and Policy Conference, **"This next week is a key, seminal moment in modern California history."**

Simply put, the decision to let the voters consider a balanced approach by which we postpone scheduled tax cuts for five years is bigger than Proposition 13, Proposition 92, AB 1725 and SB 361 were for community colleges.

That's why League staff scrambled on Friday to visit five key legislative offices in Stockton, Modesto, San Luis Obispo, Visalia and Yucaipa on Friday, and visited every office in the State Capitol. It was a great day of advocacy, even if Yucaipa almost didn't happen after I locked the keys to my rental car inside and our advocates at Modesto had to wait as legislative staffers took a very long lunch.

We thank the over 125 community college advocates that joined us for these events, which were covered in the [Sacramento Bee](#), on [San Luis Obispo television](#), in the [Visalia Times-Delta](#), and in several other media outlets. [Here](#) are some of the pictures of the events.

Yesterday, we ran newspaper ads such as the one above in the Barstow Desert-Dispatch (above), Modesto Bee, Porterville Recorder, Riverside Press-Enterprise, Stockton Record, San Luis Obispo Tribune, and the Visalia Times-Delta.

Now, this week. Here are some of the things you can do to make a difference, along with the time it takes to make a difference. If you give just a few minutes or hours, you can help stop the **\$2.5 billion cut** to community colleges over the next five years.

**Thank you for keeping an open mind.**

**And keeping the doors open to 407,787 more minds.**

Dear lawmakers, California is facing tough budget decisions, and a balanced approach has never been more critical. It's time to let the voters decide.

Our Community Colleges prepare students to transfer to four-year universities and enter the workforce that sustains California's economy. With funding cuts to Community Colleges learning more than 400,000 students are at risk statewide, and our colleges face a \$2.5 billion cut over the next five years.

Community Colleges are part of the budget solution. A balanced approach will result in difficult choices, but the access earned by an effective budget is simply too important to California's future.

**Take action.** Call your local legislators and ask them to place tax extensions on the June ballot to protect our schools and colleges.

**Assemblyman Paul Goh:**  
 State Capitol: 916.227.3204  
 District Office: 916.750.4776

**Senator Rob Dutton:**  
 State Capitol: 916.437.4222  
 District Office: 916.465.4190  
 District Office: 916.712.2622

**Senator Bill Sherman:**  
 State Capitol: 916.437.4227  
 District Office: 916.465.4750  
 District Office: 760.568.5408

Our Communities. Our Colleges. Our Students.

**Olivia York**  
 Newport Valley College

**Kimberly Patel**  
 Newport Valley College

**Andy Jaramilla**  
 College of the Desert

NEWMPORT VALLEY COLLEGE

COLLEGE OF THE DESERT

1. Forward this alert to your friends, family and co-workers. (1 minute!)
2. Post a link to our [Call Your Legislators page](#) on your Facebook page by visiting the page and clicking "recommend." (2 minutes!)
3. Call [your two state legislators](#). (5 minutes)
4. Print out [this Let the Voters Decide flyer](#) and post it where your friends, family and co-workers see it (of course, wherever appropriate). (10 minutes).
5. Call the [13 swing legislators](#). (39 minutes).
6. BONUS: If you live in the city of San Francisco, or attend City College of San Francisco, [call Senator Leland Yee](#) (who is running for mayor) to urge him to support the balanced approach. (2 minutes!)

**Advocacy isn't difficult. In an hour of your time, you can make a huge difference.**

We are making progress even if it has been an uphill battle. As former Republican Assemblymember Roger Niello said at the FACCC conference yesterday, we must raise our voices against, and correct the factual lies of, John and Ken. Niello should know, as the shock jocks put his "head on a stick" in 2009 after voting for a reform package and two years of temporary taxes.

The latest visuals on John and Ken's website [shows the twelve Republicans with an open mind being run over by a bus](#) and with their decapitated heads placed on posts. Now, I've seen plenty of radical, ugly, and ill-informed political rhetoric over the years from activists on both the left and right, but rarely are they supported by mainstream advertisers as the largest drive-time radio show in the state.

They have a million listeners, which is significant when only 4.9 million Californians voted in the May 2009 special election. **We have nearly 3 million listeners, but we must raise our voices.** Beyond our current faculty, staff, students, trustees and community supporters, 85% of the likely voters in the June special election either went to community college or have someone in their immediate family who did. **To them, you are a stronger voice than John and Ken. It is up to you to communicate to your legislators and paint a real picture of the decision at stake.**

**This is a defining moment.** California's Community Colleges took \$400 million in state cuts in 2009-10. We are prepared to take an additional \$400 million in 2011-2012. You have seen the impact to essential community college programs enabling opportunity such as Matriculation, EOPS, DSPS, and CalWORKs. You have seen the students waiting to get in the doors, while the "lucky ones" have been asked to pick up \$190 million in additional student fees to backfill the state cuts.

An all-cuts budget is simply too risk for California's future. Over **60,000 additional course sections would be eliminated** at a time when thousands of students are on waiting lists. Thousands of full- and part-time faculty and staff would be laid off, and important training programs for nurses, electricians and computer programmers will be on the chopping block.

**Will we take a responsible approach and make \$12.5 billion in budget cuts and suspend the scheduled tax cuts for five years, or will we double the cuts and cut \$25.4 billion (29% of 2010-11 general fund expenditures)?**

Those are the only two options on the table this week. It is indeed a defining moment.

Sincerely,



Scott Lay  
President and Chief Executive Officer, The League  
Orange Coast College '94

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