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May 16, 2022

Senator Scott Wiener  
1021 O Street, Suite 6630  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Members of the Committee on Appropriations  
1021 O Street, Suite 8220  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Members of the Senate Standing Committee on Education  
1021 O Street, Room 6740  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Position: Oppose Unless Amended SB 964 (Wiener)

Dear Senator Wiener, Members of the Committee on Appropriations, and Members of the Senate Standing Committee on Education:

The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC) is writing this letter to express our opposition to SB 964 (Wiener) unless amended. This bill would require the California Community Colleges and the California State University, and request the University of California, to develop two accelerated programs of study related to degrees in social work. The bill would require one program to offer a concurrent bachelor's and master's of social work program that would allow students to combine their last one or two years of undergraduate study in social work with their graduate study in social work in order to complete both programs at an accelerated rate.

The ASCCC very much appreciates your interest in and effort at finding solutions for the development of an adequate licensed, certified, or registered clinical behavioral health workforce to provide much needed services in California's communities. However, we do not believe that the bill in its current form will accomplish those goals. In addition, the ASCCC has a position to oppose legislation of curriculum without inclusion of academic senate participation.<sup>a</sup>

Therefore, the ASCCC recommends including language for the California Community Colleges and California State University Chancellors' Offices to work with the ASCCC and the Academic Senate for California State University to explore options for developing programs that would increase the licensed, certified, or registered clinical behavioral health workforce to provide services in communities and provide a report to the Senate by some reasonable date.

The ASCCC further recommends omitting the following language that specifically requires a degree program or pathway be created:

**66024.3.**

~~(a) The California Community Colleges, the California State University, and the University of California shall~~ *Colleges and the California State University shall, and the University of California is requested to,* develop both of the following accelerated programs of study related to degrees in social work:

~~(a)~~

*(1) A concurrent bachelor's and master's of social work program that will allow students to combine their last one or two years of undergraduate study in social work with their graduate study in social work in order to complete both programs at an accelerated rate. The program shall require a student to take a course on working with the severely mentally ill, with a*

<sup>a</sup> ASCCC Resolution F20 06.01:

<https://www.asccc.org/resolutions/oppose-legislation-curriculum-without-inclusion-academic-senate-participation>

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focus on working in the public behavioral health system.

~~(b)~~


(2) An accelerated academic program in which students with experience as peer support specialists, *registered or certified alcohol or other drug counselors*, community health workers, or psychiatric technicians may receive their associate's degree, as well as a bachelor's and master's degree in social work. The program shall require a student to take a course on working with the severely mentally ill, with a focus on working in the public behavioral health system. The program shall be designed to be completed by a student who is working full-time and may include online, part-time, and night class options.

*(b) For purposes of this section, "behavioral health" refers to both mental health and substance use disorder.*

For these reasons, **the ASCCC opposes SB 964 (Wiener) unless amended**. We would welcome the opportunity to work with your office and others to amend this bill; feel free to contact us if we can be of assistance.

Please feel free to reach out should you have any questions.

Respectfully,



Dolores Davison, President