

January 27, 2022

Senator Nancy Skinner, Chair
Senate Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 5094
Sacramento, CA 95814

Assemblymember Phil Ting, Chair
Assembly Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 6026
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Part-time Faculty Health Insurance Program Funding Increase

Dear Senator Skinner and Assemblymember Ting,

The California Federation of Teachers (CFT) is in strong support of Governor Newsom’s proposal to include \$200 million in on-going funding to the Part-time Faculty Health Insurance Program and urge the Legislature to not only approve this proposal but to also include the necessary modifications to this program to help ensure these funds are used to help as many part-faculty members as possible.

While community colleges have come to rely more heavily on part-time faculty to provide instruction and support for the millions of students served throughout the California Community College System, investments in healthcare and other support for this contingent workforce have lagged significantly. Particularly during this pandemic, access to healthcare is even more critical for part-time faculty.

Increasing investments in part-time faculty healthcare by \$200 million on an on-going basis is a necessary first step in ensuring healthcare for part-time faculty is accessible and affordable but additional tools are needed to maximize these new investments and deliver the intended results for part-time faculty.

We urge the Legislature to approve the proposed \$200 million increase in funding for the Part-time Faculty Health Insurance Program but with the following programmatic changes:

- (1) **Increase District Reimbursement Rates with a Focus on Quality:** Allow districts to receive reimbursements over the existing 50-percent cap if there are funds remaining after the initial disbursement, but only to districts that meet specific criteria for providing accessible, affordable and quality healthcare. This would help incentivize districts to provide quality healthcare while ensuring more of the newly invested funds can be accessed by districts. Some conditions for accessing the additional funds over the existing 50% reimbursement cap should include:
 - a. Offer healthcare to all part-time faculty working at least 40% of a full-time load.
 - b. Allow all part-time faculty working at least 40% of a full-time load to be eligible for coverage immediately upon meeting this requirement.
 - c. Offer part-time faculty the same healthcare provided to full-time faculty.
 - d. Provide reimbursement for eligible “Freeway Flyers” (more below)
 - e. Cap employee contributions toward healthcare to no more than 10-percent of premium costs.

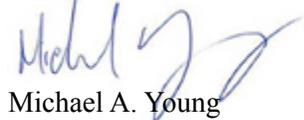
- (2) **Protect “Freeway Flyers”:** Allow part-time faculty that combine to teach at least 40-percent of a full-time load across multiple community college districts, but is otherwise ineligible for healthcare at

any one district, to be eligible to receive proportional reimbursements through the Part-time Faculty Health Insurance Program from district employers. The existing Program currently does not allow any reimbursements for these Freeway Flyers, despite working over the 40-percent load requirement (combined), leaving many without access to healthcare. This change would allow “Freeway Flyers” who must pay out of pocket to purchase healthcare either from Covered California or other entities to be eligible for some form of reimbursement from district employers to help offset those costs.

- (3) **Limited Reopener:** Districts could start receiving the proposed increased funds from the Part-time Faculty Health Insurance Program this year (if approved), but many collective bargaining agreements, where healthcare benefits are locally negotiated, may not expire for another 3 years. The Legislature should allow for a narrow and limited reopener exclusively on healthcare and the utilization of these new investments in the Part-time Faculty Health Insurance Program so more workers can see results sooner versus having to wait years.

Never has the need for health care been more clear or more urgent. We urge the Legislature to take quick action to not only approve these new investments, but ensure these new funds are used for their intended purpose - providing quality healthcare to more part-time faculty.

Sincerely,



Michael A. Young

Legislative Representative

MY: ac-opeiu29 afl-cio

CC: Senator John Laird, Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 1 on Education Finance
Members, Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 1 on Education Finance
Assemblymember Kevin McCarty, Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2
Members, Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2 on Education Finance
Mark Martin, Assembly Budget Committee Consultant
Christopher Francis, Senate Budget Committee Consultant
Mónica Henestroza, Office of Speaker Rendon
Andrew Medina, Office of Pro Tem Atkins
Nichole Munoz-Murillo, Deputy Legislative Affairs Secretary to Governor Newsom
Michelle Nguyen, Department of Finance
Dan Hanower, Department of Finance
Paul Steenhausen, Legislative Analyst’s Office