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League of United Latin American Citizens

Tuesday, May 27, 2014

The Honorable Alex Padilla
State Capitol, Room 4038
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 1200- Support

Dear Senator Padilla,

I am writing to express that the League of United Latin American Citizens supports of SB 1200.

This important bill would create clear communication between high schools and the UC/CSU admission process. Develop guidelines for high school computer science courses that may be approved by the UC and CSU for computer science courses determined to meet mathematics subject area requirements, the University of California shall ensure that these courses build upon fundamental mathematics content. The U.S. Department of Labor estimates that computer science-related jobs will be among the fastest growing and highest paying over the next decade. California is driving the digital age and is the world leader in computing, information technology, the new “ap” economy and advanced technology sectors. Of the 1.1 million STEM jobs that will need to be filled in California by 2018, computing-related jobs account for nearly half.

Unfortunately, while computer science is driving job growth and innovation, most Californians are unlikely to possess the skills necessary to work in the field. This is largely due to education policies that significantly undervalue the role of computer science in our lives and our future.

Given rigorous academic demands, most students do not have the time to take an advanced computer science course that will not satisfy “a-g” requirements. In states that do, the results are dramatic. Advanced Placement Computer Science (AP CS) courses are 50 percent larger in states that “count” AP CS as a math or science course, compared to states that do not.

In California, computer science courses do not count towards core high school graduation requirements. Generally, neither the University of California (UC) nor the California State University (CSU) campuses count computer science as satisfying a mathematics requirement towards admission; at best, computer science is treated as a college-prep elective.

We appreciate your leadership and thank you for efforts. Establishing clear guidelines will help high schools form advanced computer science courses in a manner that is consistent with admissions standards. For the reasons above, the League of United Latin American Citizens supports SB 1200.

Respectfully,

Brent Wilkes

LULAC National Executive Director