FACT SHEET
AB 2163 (Low): Open CSU Presidency and Chancellorship Searches

SUMMARY
AB 2163 would require the California State University (CSU) to reveal the names of finalists for a campus presidency or the system chancellor to be publicly released and for the finalists to be made to participate in a public forum on the campus in question.

PROBLEM
The CSU is comprised of 23 campuses with more than 40,000 faculty and staff and more than 420,000 students.

Searches for university presidents and chancellor candidates comprise the recruitment and hiring process for some of the most important public jobs in the state; indeed, the chancellor is tasked with the responsibility of leading one of the largest public postsecondary education systems in the world.

Currently when there is an impending vacancy, CSU Board of Trustees policy directs the chair of the board to appoint a Trustees Committee for the Selection of the President comprised of the board’s chair, four trustees and the chancellor. A second committee is also empaneled, the Advisory Committee to the Trustees Committee, to provide advice and consultation. After consulting with these committees, the chancellor and chair of the Trustees Committee determine whether to schedule campus visits, which are optional. The process is confidential until a finalist for the position is announced.

SOLUTION
This bill would require that before the selection of a candidate for a campus presidency or chancellorship, the names of any finalists for the position must be made public. Further, this bill requires finalists to participate in a public, campus-based forum.

The aim of this legislation is to have a transparent, inclusive process to ensure a president or chancellor selected will have the trust and support of both the public and the university community.

The CSU is at a critical juncture and is in the midst of economic pressures from years of decreased funding and a growing student population. An open selection process will allow for the involvement and participation of the CSU community, which includes students, parents, faculty and staff. In a time when student fees are high and public scrutiny is increasing, it is imperative that the selection process is as diverse, transparent and inclusive as possible.

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