



As a constituent, I urge you to explore new revenues before supporting further cuts to higher education. In particular, please fight for SB 600 and AB 656, which would raise tobacco and oil severance fees and are widely popular with Californians.

If we have future deficits, we must either raise revenues or cut services. We can't afford the latter. As a UC student, I've seen my fees balloon in response to vanishing state support. They increased 9.3% this year, and they could rise another 32% next fall. Higher education deserves better. It is critical to the future of our state, and we must protect it.

SB 600 offers a better alternative. It would raise California's tobacco fees, which now rank only 32<sup>nd</sup> in the nation. Such fees would both reduce smoking and make money; in particular, SB 600 would generate \$1.2 billion. SB 600 is also popular; a July poll registered 73% support.

AB 656 would place a 9.9% "severance" fee on oil companies. Regrettably, California is the only oil-producing state without such a fee. AB 656 would generate \$1 billion, all of which would be reserved for higher education. Like SB 600 AB 656 is also popular, polling at 66% support.

In higher education, we can't afford more cuts. Enough is enough. We need affordable, accessible institutions; we must protect our public universities. SB 600 and AB 656 would minimize the impacts of future cuts, and we should adopt these popular, common sense solutions.

Sincerely,