

## **Resolution Calling for a Referendum of No Confidence in Chancellor Mildred García**

WHEREAS, the California State University (CSU) Chancellor's office has demonstrated a lengthy history of financial mismanagement and budget nontransparency, as detailed by California (CA) State Audit Reports in 2016<sup>1</sup> and 2007<sup>2</sup>; the CSU Chancellor's office has repeatedly failed to implement the vast majority of state auditor budget and transparency recommendations despite these recommendations being made almost two decades ago (in 2007); and

WHEREAS, the 2007 audit reports show average compensation for CSU executives increased by 25.1% from 2002-2007, while in contrast average pay for tenured-track faculty and other faculty increased by a mere 5.6% and 6.2%, respectively; and CA state auditors note this increase in executive pay is primarily due to executive salary increases approved by the CSU Board of Trustees, which were found by the auditor to frequently lack merit, be based on questionable methodologies, and have dubious justification; and

WHEREAS, this trend in skyrocketing executive salary increases that far outpace faculty and staff compensation increases has continued to the present, as CSU campus presidents pay has increased 43% on average between 2007 and 2022<sup>3</sup>; and this trend of ever increasing executive pay has been exacerbated under our current Chancellor, Mildred Garcia<sup>4,5</sup>, whose total compensation now totals approximately \$1 million annually, which equates to a 66% increase to the CSU Chancellor's compensation compared to just five years ago in 2020<sup>6,7</sup>; and

WHEREAS, the syphoning of tuition, student fees, and state appropriated dollars towards ever increasing executive compensation, external consultants, and capital (growth) spending has implications for the quality of education, research, mentorship, counseling, and other services our students receive; it is therefore concerning to examine the changes in CSU financial priorities from Academic Year 2018-2019 to Academic Year 2023-2024, which shows recent changes in spending over this six year period, including: state appropriations increased +51.7%, funding of instruction decreased -11.5%, campus police budgets increased +13.3%, spending on management personnel (salaries alone) increased +19.4%, cash in investments increased +69.2%, and capital spending (for growth/new facilities) increased +81.3%<sup>8</sup>; and

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<sup>1</sup> California State Auditor Report Number 2016-122: California State University: Stronger Oversight Is Needed for Hiring and Compensating Management Personnel and for Monitoring Campus Budgets.

<sup>2</sup> California State Auditor Report Number 2007-102.1: California State University: It Needs to Strengthen Its Oversight and Establish Stricter Policies for Compensating Current and Former Employees

<sup>3</sup> CalMatters (December 2023): Pay for Cal State presidents has grown at nearly twice the rate as pay for lecturers

<sup>4</sup> calstate.edu: CSU Executive Compensation

<sup>5</sup> Petaluma Argus-Courier (March 2025): Here's what top CSU and SSU administrators make

<sup>6</sup> CSU Board of Trustees: July 2023 Agenda and CSU Board of Trustees: September 2023 Agenda

<sup>7</sup> CFA Flyer (2020): CSU approves exorbitant executive salary - again!

<sup>8</sup> CFA Equity Series (2025): Shortchanging Students: How the CSU is Failing Our Future

WHEREAS, Chancellor García failed to sufficiently consult with faculty or ethicists, failed to utilize systemwide shared governance, and failed to consider concerns regarding intellectual property rights in the inception of the AI Initiative, where the unilateral decision was made to spend \$16.9 million<sup>9,10</sup>; and

WHEREAS, the AI Initiative exacerbates the trend of increased reliance of the public CSU on private, for-profit corporations, furthering our move away from the CSU's core mission as a public institution; and

WHEREAS, Chancellor García has failed to uphold the values of the CSU; has failed to protect its students, faculty and staff from recent anti-democratic initiatives; has failed to protect free speech on campus; has facilitated California State University Los Angeles' submission of the personal contact information of employees to the United States Equal Employment Opportunities Commission; and has imposed new Time, Place, and Manner rules that place more onerous restrictions on student protests and facilitate greater sanctions for violations of such rules; and

WHEREAS, Chancellor García has failed to engage in good faith bargaining with the California Faculty Association (CFA) resulting in the filing of Public Employee Relations Board (PERB) charges<sup>11</sup>, delayed contract negotiations, and multiple extensions of an expired Collective Bargaining Agreement; and

WHEREAS, Chancellor García publicly endorsed California Assembly Bill 656: California State University - Doctoral Programs<sup>12,13</sup> then rejected, in writing, the proposal of an independent Ph.D. in Advanced Manufacturing, submitted by the San Diego State University (SDSU) College of Engineering without providing a legal reason, or CSU policy supporting this decision<sup>14,15</sup>, conveying only that "conceptual proposals for independent Ph.D. programs in the CSU are prohibited at this time"; and

WHEREAS, with this brief sentence, CSU faculty are now "prohibited" from exercising the rights which are explicitly afforded to them under AB-656; and

WHEREAS, we are deeply concerned that the CSU is limiting its own ability to serve students, expand access for underrepresented groups, is negating faculty primacy in academic matters, while continuing to disregard the principles of shared governance; so be it

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<sup>9</sup> EdSource (2025): [Cal State unveils artificial intelligence tools for students](#)

<sup>10</sup> CFA News (2025): [Leader Voices Concerns Over CSU AI Implementation at Oversight Hearing](#)

<sup>11</sup> CFA News (2025): [CFA Files PERB Charge Over CSU's Failure to Bargain in Good Faith \(includes link to PERB Charge\)](#)

<sup>12</sup> CSU Press Release (2023): [Chancellor Mildred García Statement on Signing of Assembly Bill 656: CSU Doctoral Programs](#)

<sup>13</sup> [California Assembly Bill 656](#)

<sup>14</sup> [Email from the Office of the Chancellor Prohibiting Doctoral Proposal](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Email from SDSU Provost Regarding Doctoral Program Criteria](#)

RESOLVED, that the San Diego State University (SDSU) University Senate unequivocally reiterate its commitment to meeting the mission of our university, which is to cultivate and amplify our students' unique talents, diverse life experiences, and intellect through engaged teaching, learning, scholarship, research, and public service that support their overall success, well-being, and the greater good; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the SDSU University Senate declare that the actions and decisions of Chancellor Mildred García provide copious evidence of failed leadership and an unwillingness to join the faculty, staff, and local communities of the California State University (CSU) system in working to meet that mission in a time of extreme financial uncertainty; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the SDSU University Senate formally express a Vote of No Confidence in Chancellor Mildred García; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the SDSU University Senate calls for immediate corrective action by the Office of the Chancellor and the CSU Board of Trustees to:

- Review and reform CSU labor relations practices to ensure compliance with the California Higher Education Employer-Employee Relations Act (HEERA) and to restore trust between CSU administration and faculty and staff unions;
- Affirm and protect faculty rights to propose and develop Doctor of Philosophy, professional, and applied doctoral programs that do not conflict with University of California programs;
- Reinstate and strengthen systemwide shared governance processes to ensure meaningful faculty consultation and consent in major academic and fiscal decisions;
- Reevaluate the CSU Artificial Intelligence (AI) Initiative and similar systemwide programs to ensure alignment with the CSU's public mission, ethical standards, and faculty oversight; and
- Reevaluate the policies on both Time, Place, and Manner and on responses to federal agency requests for employee contact information to ensure that such policies uphold shared governance, free inquiry, civil discourse, and the protection of constitutional rights on campus; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this resolution be distributed to

Governor Gavin Newsom,

Chancellor Mildred García,

the CSU Board of Trustees,

SDSU President Adela de la Torre,

Chairs of CSU campus Senates,

the Chair of the Academic Senate of the CSU (ASCSU), and

the President of the California Faculty Association (CFA).

## **RATIONALE**

Chancellor Mildred García's tenure has been marked by a series of actions that demonstrate a lack of compliance with statutory obligations, disregard for established systemwide governance policies, and erosion of institutional trust across the California State University (CSU) system.

### **1. Violations of Collective Bargaining Obligations**

Under the California Higher Education Employer-Employee Relations Act (HEERA), CSU administrators are legally required to engage in good-faith bargaining with recognized employee unions. Chancellor García and her executive team have refused to meet with the California Faculty Association (CFA) bargaining team, resulting in prolonged contract extensions, unresolved grievances, and multiple Public Employee Relations Board (PERB) complaints for failure to bargain in good faith.

These failures represent a fundamental breach of labor law and an institutional dismissal of the shared governance and collegial consultation required under both HEERA and CSU system policy.

### **2. Inconsistency with State Law on Doctoral Education (AB 656)**

Chancellor García publicly endorsed Assembly Bill 656, which authorizes CSU campuses to offer Doctor of Philosophy, professional, and applied doctoral programs that do not conflict with University of California offerings. However, the Office of the Chancellor subsequently prohibited campuses from submitting independent Ph.D. proposals, such as the SDSU College of Engineering's proposed doctoral program in Advanced Manufacturing.

This reversal directly contradicts the intent of AB 656, curtails faculty rights, and undermines the CSU's ability to expand doctoral-level education for diverse and underrepresented students.

Moreover, the Chancellor's Office has not provided start-up funding or advising support for approved programs, effectively delaying implementation for up to two years and limiting CSU's capacity to meet the workforce and research needs outlined in state higher education policy.

### **3. Breaches of Shared Governance and Ethical Oversight**

The Chancellor's unilateral launch of the CSU Artificial Intelligence (AI) Initiative, a \$16.9 million expenditure, occurred without meaningful faculty consultation or ethical review.

This initiative, implemented without systemwide input, raises unresolved concerns about academic freedom, data privacy, intellectual property, environmental consequences, and surveillance, and aligns the CSU with private, for-profit interests inconsistent with its public mission.

The lack of shared governance in major academic and financial decisions has become emblematic of the current administration's leadership style and a key factor in this resolution's call for corrective action.

#### **4. Failure to Uphold CSU Values and Constitutional Protections**

Chancellor García has also failed to uphold the values of the CSU, including the protection of free inquiry, civil discourse, and constitutional rights on campus. She has failed to protect students, faculty, and staff from recent anti-democratic initiatives; failed to protect free speech on CSU campuses; and has permitted California State University, Los Angeles, to submit the personal contact information of employees to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission without adequate protection of privacy or due process.

Further, she has imposed new Time, Place, and Manner (TPM) rules that place more onerous restrictions on student protests and facilitate greater sanctions for violations of such rules, chilling lawful expression and activism on CSU campuses. These actions undermine the CSU's mission as a public institution devoted to critical inquiry, civic engagement, and democratic participation.

#### **5. Fiscal Transparency, Misinterpretation, and Accountability**

The Senate University Resources and Planning (URP) Committee's correctly notes that the California Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) 2025–2026 CSU Budget Report states that CSU's *uncommitted core reserves* equal 1.1 months of expenditures (approximately 34 days), a figure below the system's target range of three to six months. The LAO clarifies that the reserve policy applies only to *uncommitted reserves*, not the total \$8 billion in "cash invested."

Furthermore, CSU's Consolidated Investment Pool includes:

- A Liquidity Portfolio (LP): Short-term investments used for immediate operating expenses; and
- A Total Return Portfolio (TRP): Long-term investments restricted by Education Code § 89726 for capital outlay and maintenance, not ongoing operations.

These clarifications indicate that prior calculations conflated liquid operating funds with long-term, restricted assets. Nonetheless, the underlying problem persists: CSU's communication and budget reporting practices remain opaque, leaving faculty and staff unable to fully evaluate fiscal priorities, resource allocation, or equity in campus funding.

#### **6. Transparency and Accountability Failures**

While CSU's Financial Transparency Portal and audited financial statements make fiscal data publicly accessible, these resources are underutilized and poorly communicated to internal stakeholders. The issue is not simply the presence of data, but the absence of transparent and participatory decision-making about how those funds are prioritized and spent. This lack of clarity, combined with inconsistent statements about fiscal austerity, ongoing labor disputes, and unilateral administrative initiatives, has severely undermined confidence in the Chancellor's leadership.

## **Conclusion**

Chancellor García's administration has demonstrated noncompliance with labor law, disregard for state legislative authority (AB 656), and failure to uphold CSU's own shared governance principles.

These leadership failures compromise the CSU's public mission, erode trust among faculty, staff, and students, and threaten the university's long-standing commitment to equity, transparency, and accountability.

## **Endorsed By:**

SDSU University Senate on November 4, 2025