



From: California Lt. Governor Eleni Kounalakis,
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Connecting Higher Education Communities – California Lieutenant Governor Sits on Every California Public Higher Education System Governing Board

California Lt. Governor Eleni Kounalakis is now attending meetings as an ex-officio voting member of the California Community Colleges (CCC) Board of Governors. California SB 820, a budget trailer bill approved by the California State Legislature, added the Lieutenant Governor to the CCC Board of Governors.

The move establishes Lt. Governor Kounalakis - and all future lieutenant governors of California - as the only member of every governing board overseeing California's public higher education system. It also brings the voice of a statewide elected leader to all three institutions: the CCC Board of Governors, University of California (UC) Regents and California State University (CSU) Board of Trustees.

"I thank the Governor and legislative leadership for recognizing that the people of California deserve an elected representative on the oversight boards of all of our state's exceptional systems of public higher education," said Lieutenant Governor Kounalakis.

"The Lieutenant Governor's office is well positioned to be the voice of all Californians across these institutions. With 2.1 million students, the California Community College system is the largest higher education system in the United States. It is the leading provider of career education and training that Californians need right now, and one of the most important tools we have to promote social and economic mobility. I look forward to having a seat at this table, and am equally excited to provide continuity across these three governing bodies today and for all future administrations to come."

The announcement comes at a time that the nexus between the CCC and California's other higher education systems is stronger than ever, with 29% of all UC graduates and 51% of all CSU graduates starting at a community college.

California Lt. Governor Kounalakis is California's Representative for International Affairs and Trade, appointed by the Governor by executive order. Under California's Constitution, the Lieutenant Governor serves as Acting Governor whenever the Governor is absent from the state, and automatically becomes Governor if a vacancy occurs in the Office of Governor. The Lieutenant Governor is President of the Senate and votes in case of a tie. The Lieutenant Governor serves on, and rotates with the State Controller, as chair of the three-member State Lands Commission. During alternate years, when the Lieutenant Governor serves as State Lands Commission Chair, she also serves as a member of the California Ocean Protection Council and as a non-voting member of the California Coastal Commission. In addition, under state statutes, the Lieutenant Governor chairs the California Commission for Economic Development, and by statute, the Lieutenant Governor serves as a voting member of the Board of Regents of the University of California, the Board of Trustees of the California State University system, and the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges system.