



RURAL COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES
OF CALIFORNIA

April 5, 2024

The Honorable Josh Newman
Chair, Senate Education Committee
1021 O Street, Room 6740
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Senate Bill 1222 (Alvarado-Gil) – Support
As Amended March 18, 2024**

Dear Chair Newman:

The Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) supports Senate Bill 1222 (Alvarado-Gil). This measure would require the Legislative Analyst's Office to conduct a study evaluating the educational needs and opportunities that exists for the five rural counties that are not included in a California Community College (CCC) district. RCRC is an association of forty rural California counties and the RCRC Board of Directors is comprised of elected supervisors from each of those member counties.

The Counties of Amador, Alpine, Mariposa, Modoc, and Sierra are currently wholly or partially outside an existing CCC district, leaving those residents without access to needed affordable postsecondary educational opportunities. SB 1222 would require the Legislative Analyst's Office to gather and analyze data on the educational limitations these counties face and make policy recommendations in a report to the Legislature. The report, developed in consultation with a working group comprised of representatives from the public higher education system and the affected counties, will present suggested pathways that will ensure all Californians have an equitable opportunity to higher education.

Rural residents face significantly unique challenges to higher education, workforce development, and vocational training due to factors such as remote geographical location and low population density. Community colleges, especially those that offer online options, can provide an accessible entry point to advanced learning, career training, and the ability for high school students to earn college credit to be more competitive in applying to a four-year university. Even without a physical facility in the county, the benefits of being part of a community college district can be seen through CCC partnerships and outreach to the community, driving educational opportunities to the

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ALPINE · AMADOR · BUTTE · CALAVERAS · COLUSA · DEL NORTE · EL DORADO · GLENN · HUMBOLDT · IMPERIAL · INYO · KINGS · LAKE · LASSEN
MADERA · MARIPOSA · MENDOCINO · MERCED · MODOC · MONO · MONTEREY · NAPA · NEVADA · PLACER · PLUMAS · SAN BENITO · SAN LUIS OBISPO
SANTA BARBARA · SHASTA · SIERRA · SISKIYOU · SOLANO · SONOMA · SUTTER · TEHAMA · TRINITY · TULARE · TUOLUMNE · YOLO · YUBA

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residents. AB 1222 will analyze how we can bring those same benefits to the underserved five rural counties.

For these reasons, RCRC supports SB 1222 and respectfully requests your “aye” vote when this measure is heard before your committee.

Sincerely,



Tracy Rhine
Senior Policy Advocate

cc: The Honorable Marie Alvarado-Gil, Member of the California State Senate
Members of the Senate Education Committee
Lynn Lorber, Chief Consultant, Senate Education Committee
Amanda Richie, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus