

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 11, 2025

The Honorable Linda McMahon
Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

The Honorable Pam Bondi
Attorney General
Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Secretary McMahon and Attorney General Bondi:

We are writing to raise urgent concerns about the ongoing financial aid fraud affecting the California Community College system. As members of the California delegation, we are demanding greater transparency, accountability, and a comprehensive investigation into this scandal.

Recent data from the Chancellor's Office reveals that approximately 34% of community college applications from the last calendar year were fraudulent.¹ These figures only account for those scams that were detected. Alarming, fraudulent actors have already siphoned off more than \$10 million in federal funds and upwards of \$3 million in state aid, according to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.²

This is not a marginal issue. It represents a major misuse of public funds and a betrayal of the trust Californians place in their education institutions.

The Governor's expected revised May budget will potentially include cuts across departments and tax increases. Californians are putting their trust in their leaders to be stewards of their finances. Allowing this rise in fraud to go unaddressed is negligent on the Community College system, as these bad actors take away opportunities from real students in impacted courses such as accounting, nursing, etc.

While we acknowledge that there may be cuts in the Governor's budget thereby creating obstacles for fraud prevention, this setback does not eliminate the responsibility that state and college leadership hold. Californians deserve a full account of how this was allowed to escalate and what concrete steps are being taken now to contain and resolve it.

We urge your respective Departments to conduct a transparent and independent investigation, provide regular updates to the public, and **take immediate action to prevent further waste, fraud, and abuse of precious taxpayer dollars as the Congress and the President seek a**

¹ Echelman, A. (2025, April 8). *Fake student aid: California colleges detect more fraudsters stealing millions*. CalMatters. <https://calmatters.org/education/higher-education/2025/04/financial-aid-fraud-2/>

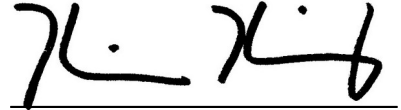
² Id.

consensus on how to curb wasteful federal spending. This crisis strikes at the heart of fairness and access to education in California at a time that our state is facing a financial crisis.

Sincerely,



Young Kim
Member of Congress



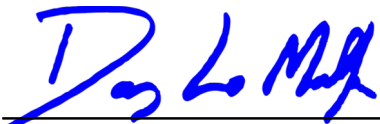
Kevin Kiley
Member of Congress



Ken Calvert
Member of Congress



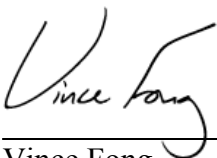
David G. Valadao
Member of Congress



Doug LaMalfa
Member of Congress



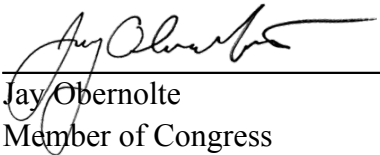
Darrell Issa
Member of Congress



Vince Fong
Member of Congress



Tom McClintock
Member of Congress



Jay Obernolte
Member of Congress