Resolution on Revenue Enhancement, #RS04-227

Whereas The respective roles of government and individual citizens in any society are defined by a social contract that explicitly or implicitly specifies the expectations and responsibilities of each; and

Whereas Since the early years of the 20th century, under the leadership of Governors Hiram Johnson, William Stephens, C.C. Young, Frank Merriam, Earl Warren, Goodwin Knight, and Edmund G. ("Pat") Brown, the state of California developed an unwritten social contract that assured citizens of government protection for the welfare of the very young, the low-income elderly, the infirm, and the disabled; and

Whereas For nearly fifty years the state of California has also included in its social contract promises defined in the Master Plan for Higher Education (1960); and

Whereas As a result of the access to education assured by the Master Plan for Higher Education, the California State University (CSU) has provided the state with many hundreds of thousands of well-educated and well-trained professionals who have contributed their expertise to California, thereby contributing to the status of this state as the world’s sixth-largest economy and generating by virtue of their work many hundreds of millions of dollars in tax revenue for the State; and

Whereas The State of California is at present experiencing a budget crisis so great in its scope, and so deep, that the survival of its social contract with its citizens is in jeopardy; and

Whereas One specific effect of this crisis is that California has been unable to maintain its commitment to providing opportunity for California’s diverse population to attain a moderately priced and high quality university education; and

Whereas In 2003-2004, because of reduced funding, the California State University was unable to enroll 5000 qualified students, and in 2004-2005 further budget reductions are likely to result in denial of access to the CSU of an additional 20,000 students; and

Whereas The economic and social future of California will be profoundly and for many decades jeopardized by the inadequacy of proposed funding levels for the state’s institutions of higher education for 2004-2005 and their resulting inability to educate the teachers and child-care workers, nurses and other health care professionals, engineers, researchers, environmentalists, urban planners, linguists fluent in foreign-languages, corporate managers and leaders, and the multitude of other specialists whose expertise has built California’s role in the world economy; and

Whereas Proposed funding levels are so limited that they threaten to diminish the quality of teaching and learning in the CSU, further eroding the economic and social well-being of the state; and

Whereas California’s political leaders have been reluctant to enhance state revenues by the simple and equitable strategy of increasing taxes for the state’s wealthiest citizens; therefore be it
Resolved That
the Academic Senate of San Francisco State University (SFSU) decry the continuing failure of the State of California to provide adequate funding for the California Community Colleges, the California State University and the University of California; and further be it

Resolved That
the Academic Senate of SFSU ask the citizens of California and their elected leaders to reconsider the consequences of undermining of the State’s long-standing social contract with those of its citizens in low and middle-income groups who are unable to meet the cost of baccalaureate and graduate or professional education; and further be it

Resolved That
the Academic Senate of SFSU ask the citizens of California and their elected leaders to reconsider the consequences for the state’s economic well-being of limiting access to the higher education that will drive the state’s economy for the foreseeable future; and further be it

Resolved That
the Academic Senate of SFSU reaffirm its commitment to the cherished principles of affordability, access and quality contained in the Master Plan; and further be it

Resolved That
the Academic Senate of SFSU respectfully ask the California Legislature to enact revenue enhancements that would restore the social contract between the State and its citizens, thereby re-enabling the state to move toward restoration of its once-premier stature in the world economy; and further be it

Resolved That
the Academic Senate of SFSU forward this resolution to the Academic Senate of the CSU, the Chancellor of the CSU, the Governor of California, legislative leaders in the State Assembly and Senate, and media throughout the State.

*** Unanimously Approved by the Academic Senate on April 13, 2004 ***