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HACU Statement on California's Higher Education Budget

SACRAMENTO, CA – The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) thanks Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger for releasing a 2010-11 higher education budget that largely lives up to his promise earlier this week in his State of the State that there would be no additional cuts to higher education.

Despite the severe economic crisis, the 2010-11 California budget proposal restores the “one-time” cuts sustained in 2009-10 by the University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU). In addition, the Governor’s budget provides some enrollment growth funding for the Community Colleges (CCC), CSU and UC. HACU applauds the significant commitment to higher education these two actions demonstrate during difficult economic times.

On the other hand, the Governor’s budget also proposes to eliminate all new Competitive Cal Grants, which are critical to helping 22,500 very low-income academically qualified Californians annually finance their education (largely at the community colleges) and become productive taxpaying members of our state. HACU urges the Governor and Legislature to re-consider these cuts and allow students the ability to obtain a college degree and important job skills. Moreover, the CCC continue to sustain heavy categorical cuts. While the colleges were able to backfill those last year with budget reserves, continued underfunding this year will more severely impact access to critical programs.

“We laud the Governor for a budget that recognizes the importance that higher education will play in getting California back on the road to economic recovery,” said Antonio R. Flores, President and CEO of HACU. “We look forward to continuing to work with the Governor and the Legislature on a final budget that allows students to realize their full academic potential and become productive workers in the future. We will also continue to work over the long-term to bring higher education funding to levels that will assure a strong future for Latinos and for all Californians.”

HACU was established in 1986 with a founding membership of 18 institutions. Today, HACU represents approximately 400 colleges and universities committed to Hispanic higher education success in the U.S., Puerto Rico, Latin America, Portugal and Spain. Currently, HACU has 109 members in the state of California. HACU’s regional office in Sacramento represents its membership in the western region of the U.S. HACU is the only national educational association that represents Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs).

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