

**SFGate.com**

## Nearly 2,000 protest college spending cuts

Tanya Schevitz, Kevin Fagan, Matthew Yi, Chronicle Staff Writers

Tuesday, April 22, 2008



**(04-22) 04:00 PDT Sacramento** -- Students frustrated by the skyrocketing costs of going to college staged noisy demonstrations up and down the state Monday and said they were just warming up for protests against the governor's proposed \$1 billion cut to higher education.

"The state budget doesn't pass until June, so we have plenty of time to keep pressing," said Jennifer Knox of the UC Students Association, one of several student groups that organized the half-dozen banner-waving, slogan-chanting protests from the state Capitol to San Diego to Humboldt County.

"We need to make our legislators really understand the absolute affordability crisis facing students," Knox said. "Today was a big day. But we are far from done."

She and the nearly 2,000 others who participated in the statewide "Day of Action" said they are afraid the proposed cuts would cripple California's three-tiered college system financially and educationally.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's proposal would shrink higher education's \$11 billion share of the state budget to about \$10 billion and would require the UC, the California State University and the California Community College systems to dramatically reduce spending and increase student fees. Schwarzenegger has called for a 10 percent across-the-board reduction in all state spending to balance a budget next year that analysts say faces a shortfall of at least \$14 billion.

Leaders of Monday's demonstrations plan to resume their protests on May 14 when the UC Board of Regents meets in Los Angeles and will consider raising tuition. They also plan to return to the Capitol in Sacramento on May 19 to conduct a "study-in" protest.

"I need my education because without it, I have no future," 17-year-old Flintisha Wilson said during the rally on the Capitol steps, which was the main event. A freshman at Cal State Los Angeles, Wilson said neither of her parents went to college, and they can't afford to pay her school costs by themselves.

"With these budget cuts and tuition increases, it might break me," she said. "I am working two jobs and am still without a lot of things I need. I think it is very important to let them know we care ... we just want to be able to go to school."

## **Fees keep rising**

Fees have nearly doubled in the CSU and UC systems since the 2002-03 school year, and both systems are considering as-yet-unspecified increases for next year. This year, the 23-campus California State University system raised its tuition to \$2,772, which, when coupled with other fees, pushes the total cost to \$3,521 annually. The 10-campus University of California system increased undergraduate tuition this year to \$6,571, and other fees raise the total to \$7,494 annually.

The figures do not include expenses such as room, meals and books. Community college fees jumped from \$11 a unit to \$26 at one point before dropping back to \$20 a unit in 2007.

Schwarzenegger's planned cuts, announced in January, prompted students from the three college systems to band together to stage grassroots protests.

## **Sacramento rally the largest**

About 1,500 students came from around the state to attend the march and rally in Sacramento, which was attended by Lt. Gov. John Garamendi and several other politicians. Simultaneous protests were conducted at other locations, from Los Angeles and San Diego in the south to Arcata (Humboldt County) in the north.

Cheering and waving signs, the Sacramento contingent marched more than a mile from Raley Field to the Capitol.

"Kick us out, we will vote you out," members of the crowd chanted as they walked along a bridge crossing Highway 99 and through downtown. The line of students, which included hundreds from the Bay Area, stretched six blocks, and some motorists honked in support as they drove by.

Marchers voiced fears again and again that if Schwarzenegger's proposed cuts go through, students will end up paying more to attend but will receive reduced services and fewer classes. Students also met with legislators to lobby them to support alternatives to the cuts.

"They keep talking about us being the future of California, but if they keep cutting education, there will be no future," said Tiffany Trujillo, a 22-year-old junior at San Francisco State University. "It seems like education is always the first thing they cut."

Once the protesters reached the Capitol steps, they rallied and listened to speeches for about two hours until noon. Garamendi, a Democrat, reminded them that Ronald Reagan and Pete Wilson, the former conservative Republican governors, both raised taxes to fund education, something Schwarzenegger has flatly rejected.

"Are we ready to reach back into history and do it once again?" Garamendi asked to rousing cheers.

"We can, we must."

"Let's get real," the lieutenant governor added. "There is no more important investment than the investment in students. We will build roads, we will build trains, but the most important things to build are the minds of students."

Schwarzenegger and his top financial advisers have said the state's plummeting revenues mean that all services, from education to health care programs, must suffer cuts to close a budget gap that is likely to grow to \$14 billion - and possibly \$16 billion - by June 2009. He plans to release a revised budget on May 14.

Aaron McLear, a spokesman for Schwarzenegger, said higher education continues to be a high priority for the governor, but considering the scope of the deficit, it would be unfair to cut certain items in the state budget while leaving others untouched.

"The governor is as frustrated as the students are that he has to make these cuts. He doesn't want to make these cuts," he said.

### **Students not convinced**

That sort of sentiment didn't carry much weight with students such as Ai Ho, a 35-year-old student at City College of San Francisco who carried a sign reading "Educate to Liberate" as he marched. He said he works in digital imaging and went back to school because "I want to get a better job. Education is the way." If fees go up, he might have to drop out, he said.

One student from San Jose State, 24-year-old Joel Bridgeman, said raising the money for college was so tough that he was homeless - couch surfing - for about a year as he went to school.

"Most of the people who work in this building probably either went to CSU, UC or (community college), but as the next generation comes up they are looking for the easy solution," he said. "They are looking for what is going to get them re-elected. They say our voice doesn't matter, but I have a message for them ... we are here to demand our chance."

Hundreds of miles south, students in Los Angeles picketed at Pershing Square, chanting slogans and slowing foot traffic on the sidewalk around lunchtime. There were only about 200 students from the three college systems, but those who attended made their point loudly.

"We're talking about the future of California, and with the budget crisis going on, it only makes sense to invest in students who will give back to the economy and the state later on," said Gregory Cendana, a senior at UCLA.

### **University of california**

**\$6,571**

Average 2007-08 annual tuition for resident undergrads

(Up 70% from \$3,859 in 2002-03 and 305% from \$1,624 in 1990-91)

**California state university**

**\$2,772**

Average 2007-08 annual tuition for resident undergrads

(Up 76% from \$1,572 in 2002-03 and 255% from \$780 in 1990-91)

**California community colleges**

**\$20**

Price per unit for resident students in 2007-08

(Up 82% from \$11 in 2002-03 and 300% from \$5 in 1990-91)

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<http://sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2008/04/22/MN6R109EJM.DTL>

This article appeared on page **A - 1** of the San Francisco Chronicle

## **The Modesto Bee**

### **Capitol gets earful from college students protesting cuts**

College students gather Monday at the Capitol after marching from Raley Field to protest the governor's plan to cut education spending by 10 percent.  
Sacramento Bee Staff Photo

#### ***Protesters rip planned ed cuts***

**By MICHELLE HATFIELD**  
mhatfield@modbee.com

*last updated: April 22, 2008 06:45:29 AM*

SACRAMENTO -- Hundreds of California college students crowded the steps of the Capitol on Monday protesting proposed cuts to education funding for next year.

Their message was simple -- "Kick us out, we'll vote you out!"

They chanted that chorus in response to Gov. Schwarzenegger's recommendation to slash education spending by 10 percent, which would amount to \$1.1 billion in cuts to the state's public colleges and universities. The move was described as devastating, a nightmare and a crisis by speakers at Monday's demonstration.

Joined together in Sacramento and Los Angeles were students from community colleges, the California State University and University of California systems along with university employee union members. More than 2.6 million people attend California community colleges and public universities.

About 30 of the students at Monday's rally in Sacramento were from California State University, Stanislaus, and the University of California at Merced.

"I came to show my support, stand with people to say 'no' to what's going on in our government," said Angela Olive, a Cal State Stanislaus junior majoring in English. "It's horrible that so many social services are getting cut. ... We need more social services the way the economy is."

Cuts at public colleges most likely will mean campuses will offer fewer classes and student fees will increase. Tuition has jumped about 100 percent in the past six years.

"This is the second or third time they've wanted to raise tuition since I've started college," said Aimie Rivera, a junior studying communications at Cal State Stanislaus. "It's wrong to have us pay more when there's less and less classes. It takes longer to graduate. ... My friends have student loans; it's hard enough to pay their student fees."

#### **Putting pressure on lawmakers**

Students arrived in charter buses at Raley Field and walked a mile and a half across the Tower Bridge to the Capitol. They carried U.S. flags, some juggled while others played guitars and some held signs reading, "Working Class People Unite," "Educate, Don't Incarcerate," and "Don't Close the Door to Success."

Monday's March for Higher Education was part of an ongoing campaign to pressure Schwarzenegger and legislators to find other ways to balance the budget. Some protesters argued that colleges should get some of the funding doled out to prisons. Others suggested raising taxes.

The drive includes e-mails, faxes and calls to local representatives. Last week, Cal State Stanislaus students gathered 650 letters. Lobbying will continue throughout the spring, with planned rallies by professors and alumni in the next month.

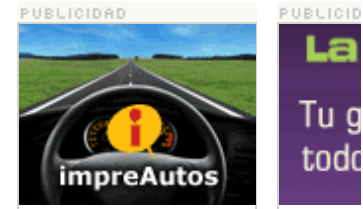
About 15 speakers at Monday's event were politicians or students. State Sen. President Pro Tem Don Perata, D-Alameda, said California has the highest cost of living but is on the road to having the lowest quality of living.

Cutting funding for college isn't the answer, protesters cried. For every \$1 spent on CSU funding, \$4.41 is generated.

After the rally, students broke into groups; many met with their respective legislators. Cal State Stanislaus students chatted with five valley politicians for about 15 minutes each.

"I hope we (accomplished something)," Rivera said. "I think it helped that students from across the state were there. I hope it makes a statement."

Bee staff writer Michelle Hatfield can be reached at [mhatfield@modbee.com](mailto:mhatfield@modbee.com) or 578-2339.



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## Universitarios protestan por recortes

Iván Mejía y Araceli Martínez Ortega | 2008-04-22 | La Opinión

"¡Los estudiantes unidos, jamás serán vencidos!", es el grito de batalla que medio centenar de universitarios coreó ayer por las calles del centro de Los Ángeles al exigir un alto a los recortes presupuestarios propuestos por el gobernador Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Alumnos del sistema de universidades de California (UC), de las universidades estatales (CSU) y de la red de colegios comunitarios (CC) demostraron en todo el estado su descontento contra las medidas propuestas por el mandatario californiano.

En Los Ángeles, se dieron cita en la Plaza Pershing.

"Los estudiantes nos hemos unido contra los recortes al presupuesto educativo", dijo Elaine Reodrica, quien cursa ciencias políticas en la Universidad de California en Los Ángeles (UCLA).

"Estos recortes nos van a afectar a todos, porque vamos a tener que pagar más por las colegiaturas", aseguró en una esquina de la Plaza Pershing.

Agitando estandartes en los que se leía "No balanceen el presupuesto sobre nuestras espaldas" y "La educación es un derecho", los alumnos que representan a 3.2 millones de educandos del sistema público marcharon hasta el edificio estatal Ronald Reagan, donde se encuentran las oficinas del gobernador. Rocío Navarro, de CalPoly Pomona, explicó que los alumnos en su universidad todavía sufren los efectos de los recortes de 2002. Estos los afectaría aun más.

"Por esto están aumentando las colegiaturas y nos estamos endeudando cada vez más, porque tenemos que sacar préstamos para pagar por la educación", explicó Navarro. "Se nos está dificultando mucho. Especialmente para los de familias en que somos los primeros en ir a la universidad. Las puertas se nos están cerrando".

En Sacramento, más de dos mil estudiantes universitarios protestaron en el Capitolio Estatal contra los recortes; se unieron a ellos en las escalinatas del edificio legislativo estatal el vicegobernador John Garamendi; el líder del Senado, Don Perata; el presidente de la Asamblea, Fabián Núñez; el líder electo del Senado, Darrell Steinberg, y otros asambleístas.

Una hora más tarde, cientos más protestaron contra la propuesta del gobernador Arnold Schwarzenegger de cerrar 48 de los 278 parques estatales, a fin de balancear el presupuesto.

El gobernador Schwarzenegger ha declarado durante las reuniones comunitarias que ha sostenido sobre la reforma presupuestal, que él también, al igual que los estudiantes, está molesto por los recortes que se tienen que hacer. Por esa razón, insiste en que se reforme el sistema presupuestal, para evitar que cuando la economía vuelva a caer dentro de cinco años como normalmente ocurre, no tenga que afectarse a nadie.



## Students, Democrats decry cuts to schools

**'We need to raise taxes before cutting education,' state Senate leader Perata says**

By Steve Geissing, MEDIANEWS SACRAMENTO BUREAU

Article Created: 04/22/2008 02:35:47 AM PDT

SACRAMENTO — During a student protest Monday, the Legislature's Democratic leaders vowed to halt \$1 billion in proposed higher-education cuts, setting the stage for a lengthy deadlock over the deficit-plagued state budget.

Senate leader Don Perata, D-Oakland, and Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez, D-Los Angeles, addressed a crowd of hundreds outside the Capitol that included groups from San Jose State University, California State University, East Bay, and the University of California, Berkeley.

Demonstrators, who included students from Bay Area community colleges, marched from a nearby staging field, then chanted, waved signs and beat drums at the rally.

Perata told them the dominant Democrats in the Legislature will not allow major higher-education funding cuts, drawing loud cheers from the audience.

"We need to raise taxes before cutting education," Perata said, suggesting the battle over Republican Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's proposed cuts would last "all summer" if necessary. The state's fiscal year officially begins July 1.

Nunez lamented that the state spends more annually

to imprison a youth than to educate one.

"We'll fight for you," Nunez said.

He cited examples of Republican legislators, who can fill out the two-thirds vote needed to raise taxes, instead blocking recent proposals to impose an oil tax and close a yacht sales-tax loophole. GOP lawmakers have sided with Schwarzenegger's pledge not to raise taxes.

Democrats' comments came just days before Schwarzenegger's alterations in his proposed budget during the traditional May revision, based on the latest revenue figures. But revenue has been falling short of predictions in recent months.

Schwarzenegger was in Los Angeles for an unrelated event. Event coordinators announced his absence, drawing loud disapproval from the crowd.

Schwarzenegger spokesman Aaron McLear said in an interview that "the governor is just as frustrated as lawmakers are" about budget cuts and "believes we shouldn't put these students through this roller coaster every year with inconsistent funding." McLear said the solution is in Schwarzenegger's proposed spending-control ballot measure.

"Democrats need to start engaging in less talk and more action," McLear said. "The sooner they start participating in solutions, rather than pointing out the frustrations, the sooner we can work together to solve this problem."

Past higher education cuts, driven by persistent state revenue shortfalls, have forced the governing boards of California's university and college systems into numerous budget-balancing actions, including fee in

creases and enrollment caps.





Protestors said they fear the governor's proposal will lead to more hardships.

Demonstrator Rose Stubbesfield, a junior at Cal State East Bay, said a tuition increase would change her life.

"I wouldn't be able to afford school," she said. "It would cut off my whole education." Debbie Borger, a UC Berkeley sophomore, said she is tired of "ridiculous" fee increases that affect her family. Several of her sisters attend Cal State.

"I don't want my parents to be worried about our education for next year and the years to come," she said.

Onyema Nkele, a freshman at San Jose State, said he was concerned it could reduce the number of students admitted to higher education and block his siblings from college.

"The politicians need to know that we're going to actively pursue these problems and not let them take out the state's budget troubles on us," he said.

# CONTRA COSTA TIMES

ContraCostaTimes.com

## Protests about education cuts ring out from students, Democrats

By Steve Geissingler  
MediaNews Sacramento Bureau

Article Launched: 04/21/2008 02:51:10 PM PDT

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# CONTRA COSTA TIMES

ContraCostaTimes.com

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# The Mercury News

MercuryNews.com

## Students rally against cuts

### DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP IN LEGISLATURE VOWS TO FIGHT SLASHING HIGHER EDUCATION

By Steve Geissinger  
Mercury News Sacramento Bureau

Article Launched: 04/22/2008 01:32:56 AM PDT

SACRAMENTO - During a student protest Monday, the Legislature's Democratic leaders vowed to halt \$1 billion in proposed higher education cuts, setting the stage for a lengthy deadlock over how to solve a massive deficit in the state budget.

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Núñez lamented that the state spends more each year to imprison a youth than to educate one.

"We'll fight for you," Núñez said.

Any tax increase would require a two-thirds vote of the Legislature, and Republicans - some of whom would be needed to meet that threshold - have sided with Schwarzenegger's pledge not to raise taxes.

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# The Mercury News

MercuryNews.com

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