

California State Senate



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December 27, 2014

To Whom It May Concern,

I write in support of the selection of West Los Angeles College (WLAC) Dental Hygiene Program as one of the pilot programs in implementation of SB 850, which would allow for applied baccalaureate degrees at the community college level in California.

The Dental Hygiene Department at WLAC offers an excellent environment in which to pilot test an applied baccalaureate degree in dental hygiene. Currently a baccalaureate degree in dental hygiene is offered only at private institutions, none are offered at a California State University or University of California.

The WLAC Dental Hygiene Program was established in 1972 and has a long history of success. It has clinical affiliations with UCLA, Veteran's Administration and several non-profit dental clinics. The program has traditionally had very high graduation and employment rates and is ranked in the top ten nationally on board examination scores.

I want to stress the equity aspect of WLAC efforts. Underserved communities are disproportionately plagued by lower rates of oral healthcare, worse health outcomes, and insufficient economic development. It is critical that these communities participate in the development of, and share in the benefits provided by, affordable higher education, the prevention of oral disease and the promotion of health. I therefore strongly support West Los Angeles College Dental Hygiene Program and the implementation of SB 850.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Hjmitchell'. The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Senator Holly J. Mitchell
30th Senate District