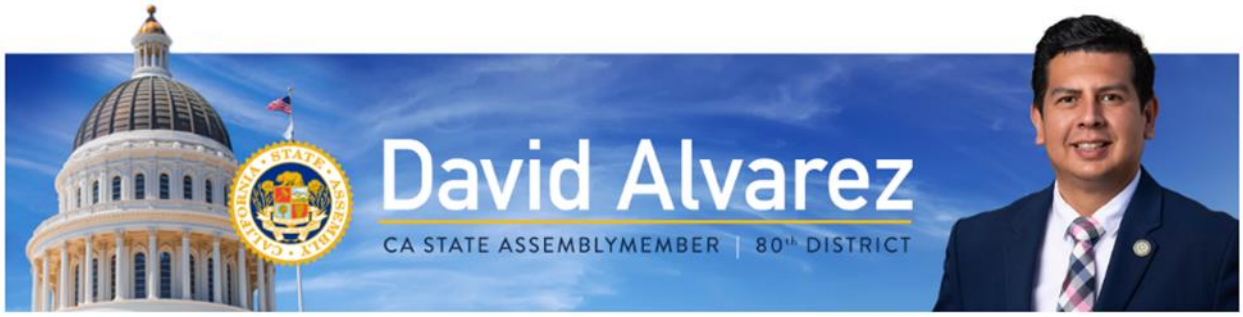

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Legislation to Empower First Generation College Students Advances in the Assembly

Sacramento, California - Today, the California Assembly Committee on Higher Education unanimously passed Assembly Bill 2953, authored by Assemblymember David Alvarez (D-San Diego). This legislation seeks to alleviate hurdles to higher education access for first generation students in California. It would require the California State University (CSU) and requests the University of California (UC) to develop and implement a 4-year accountability and outreach plan specifically for first-generation college students.

“As a first-generation college graduate and proud product of the California State University system, I am a testament to how higher education is pivotal in leveling socioeconomic disparities,” said Assemblymember Alvarez. “AB 2953 ensures that our first-generation students are being outreached to, especially in areas that are disproportionally underrepresented with low rates of college admission. Research shows a significant number of first-generation students are students of color, many of whom may not meet the eligibility criteria for California's public universities. Together, we can make a tangible difference in strengthening outreach programs and empowering first-generation students across our state.”

A 2020 report by the Public Policy Institute of California confirmed that low-income, Latino, and African American students are less than 50% likely to make it from 9th grade to obtaining a college degree as their peers. This same report also confirms that wage gains for Californians with a bachelor’s degree are about 43% higher than counterparts with just a high school diploma. In a 2023 Forbes Advisor Report, 46% of college students in California were the first in their family to go to college. Students of color who are first-generation university students often face intersectional barriers, while encountering challenges in meeting A-G requirements.

"MANA de San Diego is proud to sponsor AB 2953. This bill enhances equitable access to 4-year higher education state institutions by addressing the information gaps that low-income families face. We understand that not every student plans to attend a 4-year university and that community colleges are an important pathway to higher education. Nevertheless, all California high school students have the right to be informed about the A-G requirements and have an opportunity to complete this coursework," said Dr. Inez González Perezchica, Executive Director of MANA de San Diego.

Assembly Bill 2953 is supported by MANA de San Diego (Sponsor) and the California Charter Schools Association.