

FOOTHILL BUDGET UPDATE/NEWS

Governor Promises Protection for K-12 and Higher Education In New Budget

January 6, 2010

In his State of the State address today Gov. Schwarzenegger promised to spare K-12 and higher education from additional cuts in his 2010-2011 budget proposal, which will be released in a few days. The governor specifically singled out higher education funding as critical to the state's economic recovery and proposed a constitutional amendment to prohibit the state from spending more on prisons than higher education. Currently California spends 11 percent of its budget on prisons and just seven and a half percent on higher education. In the past prisons received three percent of the budget and higher education received 10 percent. In another indicator that California's community colleges are specifically on the governor's radar, Schwarzenegger recognized state community college Chancellor Jack Scott prior to his speech, along with notables George Schultz and Willie Brown.

The theme of his address clearly focused on collaboration with the legislature, and his goal of working together with leaders in the coming year to address the state's \$6.6 billion current year deficit, and projected \$13 billion deficit next year. While education may be spared, he did not shy away from saying further cuts are coming. "There will be more cuts...we have no choice," he said.

Schwarzenegger called on the legislature to take on several reform initiatives during his address, including privatizing prisons, creating broad tax reforms and reforming the pension system. "We need to find a water deal on pensions," he said, referring to a recent water compact successfully reached in the legislature.

He also dedicated a significant portion of his address to asking for more federal support, calling not for a federal bailout, but "federal fairness." The governor called out costs for illegal immigration, and looming costs related to the new health care bill, as needing relief by Washington.

The governor's budget proposal for the next fiscal year could be released as early as Friday. Foothill College will continue to provide information as it becomes available, and analysis of the budget proposal will follow from the State Chancellor's Office and analysis on the impact to Foothill-De Anza from FHDA Interim Chancellor Mike Brandy will follow.