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<https://www.csuerfsa.org>

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## Legislative Report: CalPERS Investments, Possible Bills, More....

By Robert Girling: CSU-ERFSA Legislative Director

**CalPERS Investments.** As of April 2025, the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) reported a total fund value of \$507 billion, down from \$527 billion in March. The \$20 billion drop is attributed to market volatility driven by the Trump administration's trade tariffs. Despite the short-term decline, CalPERS remains committed to its long-term investment strategy to meet the retirement obligations of its members.

The asset allocation for the Public Employees' Retirement Fund (PERF) in April was:

- Public Equity: 39.5%
- Private Equity: 17.0%

- Fixed Income: 29.6%
- Real Assets: 13.2%
- Private Debt: 3.6%

### Legislation

**AB 958, Expanded Faculty Representation on CSU Board of Trustees.** Assembly Bill 958, if passed, would expand the California State University (CSU) Board of Trustees from 25 to 27 members by adding two new gubernatorial appointees, including an additional faculty representative. The goal is to strengthen faculty voice in CSU governance by ensuring tenured professors

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## Tips to Keep From Being Scammed

By Prudence Zalewski, CSU Fresno

On August 16, 2024, CBS News reported a data breach by a hacker group called USDoD. That group claimed to have stolen 2.7 billion records of consumer information. Stolen were a person's full name, address, date of birth, SSN, phone number, and email address. It's likely "that everyone with a Social Security number was impacted," said Cliff Steinhauer from The National Cybersecurity Alliance. In light of this event, what proactive steps can you take to protect yourself against possible resulting scams?

**1. Stay Informed and Educated** – Understanding common scams is the first line of defense. Educate yourself on latest scam tactics through community programs, online resources, or family discus-

sions. You can also visit the Federal Trade Commission and FBI web sites at the links below to read about the latest scams. <https://consumer.ftc.gov/scams> and <https://tinyurl.com/586ehdzy>

**2. Be Skeptical of Unsolicited Contacts** – Be cautious of all unsolicited phone calls, emails, or in-person visits when money or personal information is requested of you. Never give out sensitive information like Social Security numbers, bank account information, or passwords unless you initiated the contact and trust the recipient.

**3. Verify Before Acting** – Before

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CSU-Emeritus and  
Retired Faculty and Staff  
Association  
[www.csuerfsa.org](http://www.csuerfsa.org)

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2023-2024**

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The *Reporter* welcomes submissions by members of CSU-ERFSA or other appropriate individuals of advertisements for academically oriented materials or services, to be printed at the discretion of the editor. The views expressed in the columns and articles in The CSU-ERFSA Reporter are those of the author, and not necessarily the views of CSU-ERFSA, its officers, or the editor. Editor's email: [tanagnoson@gmail.com](mailto:tanagnoson@gmail.com)

## From the President

Dear Colleagues,

As we approach the end of May and the beginning of summer, I hope you are all looking forward to some time to relax, be outdoors, and enjoy your beautiful environment.

**State Council.** The CSU-ERFSA State Council meeting was held on April 30, 2025. We had a full meeting, good attendance, and got a lot done. The various officers and committee chairs reported, and we had time for questions for each. The association is in good financial shape, and a motion was made to restore to the budget the funding for affiliate organizations for events to increase membership. The motion was passed unanimously.

The October State Council meeting was discussed briefly. The event will be held in a hybrid format at a campus in the south. We are currently looking at CSU Northridge. We are very much looking forward to getting to see one another in person in the coming years, but because travel can be difficult for many, we are planning to continue having a remote option so everyone interested can attend.

The Association had an increase in members volunteering for service this year thanks to the actions of Bethany Shifflett (SJSU) and her nominating committee. Several returning officers and committee chairs were nominated, but we added a good number of people new to their roles, and we hope the many new committee members will bring new and innovative ideas to our work.

The officers and delegates-at-large were elected unanimously. The committee chairs, committee members, and liaisons were also unanimously approved. The results of our latest election are posted on the CSU-ERFSA website (<https://tinyurl.com/tk392jdw>).

**Website.** If you haven't had a chance to look at our website recently, I encourage you to do so. You can find out what is going on throughout the association, past and present. There are links to campus affiliate websites, links to read previous editions of *The Reporter*, and information about the work being done by our members through the Grants program. Our fabulous website is due to our Website

Administrator, Stephanie Coopman (SJSU).

**Campus Enrollments.** We also discussed proposed legislation being discussed in the state Senate and Assembly. We are watching bills about medical integrity and ones that may have financial implications for the campuses. Enrollment continues to vary from campus to campus with some (like Cal Poly SLO) seeing growth, and others (like Sonoma State) seeing declines. We are all dedicated to providing a high-quality higher education to all California students and to ensure that we must maintain viable comprehensive campuses throughout the state.

**CSU-ERFSA Membership.** Membership in CSU-ERFSA continues to decline at a slow rate. We are hoping to reverse that trend by encouraging campus affiliates to actively support CSU-ERFSA and by facilitating interactions between local affiliates. Each of our campuses has much to share, and we are all proud of our individual campuses. If you have an idea about how to stimulate interaction and grow our membership, please let us know. Our membership committee, chaired by John Tarjan (CSU Bakersfield), is a group of members who are eager to work on these issues and learn about what each affiliate is doing. We are very grateful to Ed Aubert for his long tenure as chair of the membership committee, and we know that his work will not be ignored as we continue to generate interest.

The Council endorsed a formal resolution presented by the Academic Senate of the California State University (ASCSU) Senator, Jerry Schutte. The resolution endorsed the ASCSU resolution detailing the priorities for federal advocacy in the ASCSU. With so many changes to the University being caused by changes in the federal government, it is important to continue to support student success, academic freedom, and equity in higher education. As we do our work supporting the retired CSU faculty and staff, we want to be mindful of the importance of our voices.

**Reporter.** If you have an interesting story or experience you would be willing to share, please consider writing a short article for *The Reporter*. The *Reporter* editor,

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# Faculty Trustee Report to State Council

## CSU-ERFSA Half Price Membership Offer On Until June 30, 2025

By Robert Girling, Sonoma State University

Robert Girling reports on the Faculty Trustee Report to the CSU-ERFSA State Council, delivered by Dr. Darlene Yee-Melichar, Faculty Trustee for 2023-2025.

The CSU Faculty Trustee Report highlighted major concerns raised by over 100 public speakers, including opposition to layoffs, the elimination of athletics at Sonoma State, protection of sacred Indigenous land at Cal State Long Beach, tuition hikes, lack of mental health support, and criticism of leadership.

Chancellor García announced a direct admissions pilot in Riverside County granting automatic CSU acceptance to high school students, which has already seen 1,700 commitments.

Additionally, the CSU redirected unused Cal Grant funds to close an \$80 million gap in the Middle Class Scholarship program, benefiting over 238,000 students.

The system also secured \$800 million in research grants and celebrated SDSU's R1 research status.

Budget discussions dominated the meeting, with strong opposition to the Governor's proposed \$375 million cut and deferred compact funding. CSU leaders met with over 80 legislators, gaining support from 61, and outlined goals to prevent cuts, emphasize CSU's value, and push for

increased funding. Sonoma State's financial challenges were addressed, with a turnaround plan underway and a shared administrative pilot launched with SF State and Cal State East Bay.

Finally, the CSU's strategic planning process, shaped by extensive stakeholder input, is focusing on long-term sustainability through student success, adaptive teaching, financial stability, and operational excellence, with a final plan due in September.

### The 2025 Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA)

The COLA is an annual cost-of-living increase that begins the second calendar year after retirement and helps your retirement benefit keep up with the rate of inflation. Eligible retirees, including survivors and beneficiaries, should have received the COLA in their May 1 retirement check.

The COLA is dependent on three factors:

- The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI, 1967), published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) annually

- Your employer contracted COLA % (2%,

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### The Ever-Evolving CSU-ERFSA Website

By Stephanie Coopman, SJSU, Website Administrator

Websites continuously evolve, and CSU-ERFSA's website is no exception. In the last few months I've made updates to the website largely in response to suggestions from you, the CSU-ERFSA members. Here are some of the changes:

- Updated campus photos. In addition, all 23 campuses are represented on the website in masthead photos. I identified each campus with the title used on that campus's webpage, as with Cal State San Bernardino and CSU Dominguez Hills. One exception is CSUN, which I identified as CSU Northridge, for visitors unfamiliar with the CSU.

- Replaced generic senior photos with alternative images.

- Added a Grants History page to showcase the excellent work of CSU-ERFSA members that the organization has supported in the past.

- Added a *Reporter* History page that includes a list of past editors.

- Completed the *Reporter* digital archive. Tom Philo, Archivist/Cataloger at CSU, Dominguez Hills, recently scanned and sent me back issues of the *Reporter* from 1988-2006. All previous issues of the *Reporter* now are available in PDF on the

CSU-ERFSA's half-price membership sale expires June 30, 2025. The offer is for new members who join by this date and is for the first year of membership only.

To be eligible for this discount, you must mail the information requested at the following link including your check as payment:

<https://tinyurl.com/2s3c8hu4>

You will receive an annual dues renewal notice during the month you originally joined CSU-ERFSA. At that time, you will be given several easy options to renew your membership at the full rate.

- Monthly dues deductions from your CalPERS warrant
- Payment via credit card online
- Check payable to CSU-ERFSA

Membership dues are calculated as a percentage of your gross monthly retirement benefit. For your dues amount, please locate your gross **monthly** retirement benefit in the chart below and corresponding discounted membership rate for the **first year**:

Gross Monthly CalPERS Benefit	First Year Dues
Less than \$3,000	\$30
\$3,001 - \$3,600	\$36
\$3,601 - \$4,300	\$42
\$4,301 - \$5,300	\$48
\$5,301 - \$6,300	\$54
\$6,301 and above	\$60
Donor Member	\$66+

*Reporter* Archives page.

- Behind the scenes: Scoured CSU-ERFSA's web space for old and outdated pages that were live but no longer linked on the website (thanks go to our office manager, Melanie Mamakos, for identifying many of those pages).

Please contact me at [stephanie.coopman@sjsu.edu](mailto:stephanie.coopman@sjsu.edu) with any questions and comments you have. And if you have photos from recent CSU-ERFSA affiliate functions, please send them to me for possible inclusion on the website.

# CSU-ERFSA Grant Award Program

## By Marshelle Thobaben, Grants Committee Chair

Applications are due in the CSU-ERFSA Office no later than Thursday; October 30, 2025 – 2:00 p.m. PDT. Awards will be announced by December 2025.

CSU-ERFSA encourages members involved in research and creative projects to apply for a grant. They are available to members to support research and creative projects that are in accordance with the following goals:

- Scholarly research on issues important to the retiree as a continuing member of an academic discipline or community;
- Research and scholarly projects that contribute to the quality of life of the retirees in the University system;
- Research pertaining to the retirement concerns of faculty/staff/administrators within the CSU; or
- Research and creative projects that contribute to a given academic discipline.

The small grant program is competitive, with past awards ranging from \$100-\$1,000, depending upon the number of proposals and the amount of money made available for grants by the CSU-ERFA Foundation. Preference is given to first

time grant applicants when grant proposals are of equal merit. Grants are generally limited to a member being eligible to two (2) grants every five (5) years.

Grant applications and guidelines can be downloaded from the CSU-ERFSA Grant Awards Program web page, by calling the CSU-ERFSA office at (818) 677-6522, or, by emailing your request to [csuerfsa@csun.edu](mailto:csuerfsa@csun.edu).

Note: Grant Recipients are required to submit a final report of their Research/Creative Activities one year from receiving a grant. Failure to submit a report will exclude an applicant from future grant awards. The final report template can be downloaded from the CSU-ERFSA Grant Awards Program web page or obtained by calling the CSU-ERFSA office at (818) 677-6522, or by emailing [csuerfsa@csun.edu](mailto:csuerfsa@csun.edu).

The CSU-ERFA Foundation welcomes tax-deductible contributions. See [csuerfsa.org](http://csuerfsa.org) for more information.

The CSU-ERFA Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

## In Memoriam

**Bakersfield** – Barbara H. Fleming

**Fresno** – Dale Charles Burtner  
Joan Heron  
Burke Zane

**Fullerton** – Gerald Gannon  
Dindial V. Ramsamooj  
Doris M. Leffingwell

**Humboldt** – Gary A. Carver

**Los Angeles** – Robert J. Stull

**Northridge** – Olga J. Adderley  
Albert Baca  
Dorena Knepper

**Pomona** – Ronald S. Daniel

**San Diego** – Runa R. Friberg  
Maria-Barbara Watson

**San Francisco** – Imogene B. Gieling  
Eugene D. Weinstein

**Sonoma** – Stanley V. McDaniel

**Stanislaus** – Brenda E. Betts  
Noble T. Dinse

## CalPERS Board Election for 2 Seats in September

CalPERS is holding an election in September for the two Member-at-Large seats on the California Public Employees' Pension System (CalPERS) Board of Administration. The 13-member CalPERS Board sets policy and makes critical decisions year-round that directly affect members and employers, including annual health premiums and allocations of the pension fund's investments. Under the California Constitution, the CalPERS board has exclusive authority to administer the CalPERS pension fund.

A member-at-large election means that all eligible active and retired CalPERS members (excluding survivors and beneficiaries) are eligible to vote for these two positions.

The following members have been nominated for each seat:

### Member-at-Large Position A

• **Dominick Bei** – City of Santa Monica Fire Department, currently a Fire Captain. His website is [www.beiforcalpers.com](http://www.beiforcalpers.com).

• **Steve Mermell** – City of Pasadena (retired). Mermell retired as city manager of Pasadena.

• **David Miller** (incumbent) – Department of Toxic Substances

Control, currently Senior Environmental Scientist Specialist. His website is [www.davidmillerforcalpers.org](http://www.davidmillerforcalpers.org).

### Member-at-Large Position B

• **Sam Hasan Akkad** – Department of Transportation (retired). His last position was Senior Bridge Engineer.

• **Troy Johnson** – Sweetwater Union High School District, currently Senior Administrative Assistant. His website is [www.troyjohnsonforcalpers.org](http://www.troyjohnsonforcalpers.org).

• **Jose Luis Pacheco** (incumbent) – San Jose Evergreen Community College District. He is currently SharePoint Developer/Administrator. His website is [www.pachecoforcalpers.com](http://www.pachecoforcalpers.com).

Ballots will be mailed August 29, and votes must be received by September 29 to be counted. The term of the incumbents, David Miller and Jose Luis Pacheco, will expire on January 15, 2026. The new term of office will begin January 16, 2026, and end January 15, 2030.

More information on the upcoming board election will be available on the CalPERS board elections page,

# Legislative Report: Budgets, Bills, More....

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have a greater role in shaping system-wide decisions.

Currently, the board includes just one faculty trustee—appointed by the Governor from nominees submitted by the CSU Academic Senate. AB 958 proposes adding a second tenured faculty trustee, also selected from a list of at least two nominees provided by the Academic Senate. Both faculty trustees must hold tenure within the CSU system. There is no provision requiring or allowing either faculty member to be retired. As of press time, the bill passed the Assembly Committee on Higher Education, but the Committee on Appropriations referred the bill to the suspense file.

**SB 351, Safeguarding Medical Integrity from Corporate Interference.** California lawmakers are renewing efforts to protect the independence of medical and dental care through SB 351, which strengthens the state’s long-standing ban on the corporate practice of medicine. The bill aims to shield clinical decision-making from the influence of private equity firms and hedge funds, ensuring that only licensed medical professionals guide patient care.

Key provisions of SB 351 prohibit non-physician entities from influencing:

- Diagnostic testing and treatment decisions
- Patient referrals
- Medical record management
- Billing, coding, and reimbursement practices

In addition to protecting clinical autonomy, SB 351 addresses harmful employment practices by banning non-compete clauses and gag orders that restrict health care workers from raising quality-of-care concerns or seeking new employment.

To ensure compliance, the bill grants the California Attorney General enforcement authority to pursue legal action against violators. SB 351 represents a critical step toward preserving the integrity, transparency, and accountability of California’s health care system. This bill passed two substantive committees but was placed on the suspense file by the Committee on Appropriations.

**AB 326, Auditing the California State University.** AB 326 would require an external audit of each campus of the California State University to be conducted at least once every 3 years. The bill would also require all audits of the California State University or any of its campuses, including audits conducted by the university’s internal audit staff, to be available to the public. Introduced on 01/27/25; passed Assembly Higher Education Committee on 03/18/25, but placed on the suspense file by the Committee on Appropriations.

**Assembly Bill 530, CSU, Fiscal Transparency.** AB 530 would require the California State University to make their expenditures over \$10,000 of state funds publicly available on its internet website, in a format that allows the public to search and aggregate that information, by July 1, 2027. Introduced on 02/11/25, passed Assembly Higher Education Committee and referred to the suspense file by the Committee on Appropriations.

**CSU Faces (Less) Deep Cuts:** The governor’s May revise budget lowered the budget cut for the CSU from \$375 million to \$144 million, a 3% cut. Both UC and CSU are proposed for similar levels of budget reductions. Whether this will make a difference in Sonoma State’s drastic cuts and layoffs (described in our last issue) was not known at press time.

**Medicare Part D. Beware of Switching Plans.** You know those ads encouraging you to switch Medicare Part D prescription drug plans? Buyer beware: Signing up with one of these companies could cancel your and/or your dependents’ CalPERS health benefits. Medicare Part D is a voluntary federal outpatient prescription drug benefit available to everyone with Medicare. The Medicare Part D premium is paid to your health insurer as part of the CalPERS health premium.

**Don’t Take Those Ads Up on Their Offers.** Federal Medicare rules only allow enrollment into one Medicare Part D or Medicare Advantage Plan at a time. This means you can’t be enrolled in a CalPERS Medicare health benefits plan and in a non-CalPERS Medicare Part D or Medicare Advantage Plan at the same time. If you and/or your dependents are covered by CalPERS and another health

plan that includes Medicare Part D prescription drug benefits, you must cancel that Part D coverage to enroll in or continue enrollment in a CalPERS Medicare health benefits plan.

If you or your dependents who are enrolled in a Medicare plan sign up for a different Medicare Part D plan, the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) will disenroll you and/or your dependents from your CalPERS-sponsored Medicare Advantage Plan or Medicare Part D prescription drug plan. That means all CalPERS health coverage will be canceled, and you’ll be responsible for your prescription drug costs. So, if you want to keep your CalPERS health plan, you should ignore those ads.

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## Don’t Be Scammed!

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responding to requests for money or personal information, verify the legitimacy of the request. If someone contacts you claiming to be a family member who urgently needs money, contact that family member directly or consult with another family member. Government agencies like the IRS or Medicare will never ask for immediate payments over the phone.

**4. Use Strong Security Practices** – Be extremely cautious about clicking on links or downloading attachments from any unfamiliar source. Employ strong, unique passwords for online accounts and change them regularly. Enable two-factor authentication to add an extra layer of security.

**5. Limit Sharing Personal Information** – Avoid sharing personal information on Social Media. Scammers can use details from your online profile to create convincing scams to trick you.

**Join CSU-ERFSA Today!**  
 For information, see [www.csuerfsa.org](http://www.csuerfsa.org) and choose Membership, or see the box on the main page.

# Health Benefits Report: Regional / Out-of-State Coverage

By Thomas Krabacher, CSU Sacramento, CSU-ERFSA Health Benefits Director

**Expanded regional coverage update.** We reported last time that CalPERS health plan coverage was expanding into several additional counties, including Contra Costa, Imperial, Monterey, Napa, and Solano. The expansion is now complete. For Monterey, Anthem Blue Cross and Aspire (the Monterey medical group) were successful in reaching a contract agreement, and Anthem members are now able to access their providers through the Aspire network of doctors and hospitals. If members or their families encounter difficulty, they should call CalPERS for help at 855-839-4524.

**Out-of-State Recipients.** The CalPERS Pension and Health Benefits Committee is looking into the possibility of adding an additional PPO (preferred provider organization) plan to provide affordable health and pharmacy benefits for the 26,000

members who live outside of California and frequently face high premiums and lack of options. The three proposed possibilities have proved unsatisfactory to date: partnering with existing programs in other states (e.g., NY and PA) failed to generate interest in those states; the possibility of setting up a separate plan for out-of-state members would have an adverse impact on in-state PPO member premiums. The third option, a low premium program, would necessitate both benefit changes and a significant increase in out-of-pocket costs for participants.

**Telehealth Program.** A telephone-based provider of both traditional and behavioral health services, Telehealth is available to all members and has been an important provider of medical support, particularly to CalPERS members in remote areas; during the Covid pandemic, it accounted

for 48% of medical requests. The program is supported by Medicare and will remain available through September 30, 2025, at which point federal money runs out. After that date, its future is uncertain and will depend on whether federal funding continues or the State of California steps in to assume the costs.

**Dental Coverage.** The ongoing challenge presented by a lack of affordable dental plan options in rural areas was acknowledged by the CalPERS Pension and Health Benefits Committee at its March 2025 meeting, but no action was proposed at that time.

**Looking Forward.** It's only May, but remember that Open Enrollment for 2026 health plans begins in September. It's never too early to thinking about any changes you might want to make.

# CFA Report: General Assembly Meets in Los Angeles

By Jay Swartz, Cal Poly Pomona, CSU-ERFSA Liaison to CFA

For its 100th General Assembly gathering CFA delegates returned to Los Angeles to elect a new team of leaders, to tend to protecting the rights of faculty, coaches, counselors and librarians, and to pass a list of important resolutions.

It was a bittersweet time for CFA President Charles Toombs of San Diego State University, who wrapped up three supercharged terms as union leader, one in which he remained resolute even when it came to serving as the front of a statewide strike. In his farewell address he stated that "the work is just beginning" as the presidency was turned over to Margarita Berta-Avila of Sacramento State, having run unopposed from her position as CFA vice president.

"As a collective, our fight in CFA and labor is critical and urgent," Berta-Avila noted, "and as social justice unionists, it is essential to push beyond just resisting and organize together toward the future we envision."

Systemwide cutbacks were once again at the heart of CFA discussions but this time

around proposed cuts appear more severe than in recent memory. Delegates debated a way ahead to protest such measures, with Sonoma State facing the harshest cuts. At Sonoma, its president has proposed eliminating six academic departments, 23 degree programs, and the entire department of intercollegiate athletics. The Sonoma faculty senate in turn issued an unprecedented vote of no confidence against the CSU chancellor, along with the campus president and provost.

Eight resolutions were presented for ratification to the delegates at the April assembly meeting, with all passing at approval levels ranging from 58% to 100%. The resolutions were as follows:

1. Amending the Representation Policy to allow more inclusion, passed by 64%.
2. Fighting CSU Mergers, Shutdowns, Cuts and Layoffs, 58%.
3. Becoming a Sanctuary Union, 100%.
4. Eliminating Quantitative Ranking of Faculty, 59%. Quantitative rankings use points awarded for various types of publications, courses taught, student opinion surveys, etc.

5. Fighting Management Bloat, 95%.
6. Stopping all CSU partnership with Israeli universities, 83%.
7. Joining AFT lawsuit for public service loan forgiveness, 89%.
8. Funding the CSU by Defunding state prisons, 99%.

At the CFA retired faculty committee, chaired by Jonathan Karpf of San Jose State, much attention was directed toward updates from CalPERS and changes to our medical benefits package. Kaiser remains the most economical option for retirees, with barely six dollars levied above the subsidy level for the former employee and Kaiser outside California the highest at \$390.71. VSP plans also experienced increased premiums.

In addition to issues outlined above, delegates also expressed alarm about federal overreach on our campuses, noting that more than 70 CSU students have had their visas revoked. Backed by CFA and others, a state Senate bill is underway that requires prior notice when federal authorities are on any campus to conduct immigration raids.

# Legislative Report: Severe Budget Cuts Possible

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If you have questions, do contact CalPERS to get the answers you need. Call 888 CalPERS (or 888-225-7377) or send a secure message through your myCalPERS account.

## Cal Poly San Luis Obispo's Enrollment Growth: A Balanced Model?

While several CSU campuses are confronting significant enrollment declines, Cal Poly SLO continues to experience steady growth offering useful insights into how to align academic programs with emerging workforce needs without abandoning their broader educational mission. Cal Poly's "Learn by Doing" philosophy is deeply embedded across disciplines. Students in engineering, computer science, business, and agricultural sciences engage in hands-on, project-based learning that mirrors real-world challenges.

Understandably, faculty are concerned that too narrow a focus on career preparation could dilute the broader mission of higher education, one rooted in critical thinking, civic responsibility, and intellectual exploration. However, in the view of many, these applied experiences do not replace theoretical foundations but complement them. Cal Poly has maintained academic rigor while ensuring students graduate with practical skills highly valued in today's economy.

Cal Poly's experience suggests an approach:

- Developing programs that align with areas of growing societal and economic need, particularly in fields like sustainability, technology, healthcare and entrepreneurship.
- Integrating experiential learning across the curriculum, enhancing, not replacing, critical thinking, research, and analysis.
- Forging strategic partnerships with employers to keep programs current while preserving faculty oversight of academic integrity.
- Offering students clear pathways from education to employment without narrowing the purpose of higher education to mere job training.

Cal Poly's success demonstrates that it is possible to maintain the core values of a liberal education, critical inquiry, ethical reasoning, and civic engagement, while

also helping students build practical competencies.

**Sonoma State University: Faculty to Elect a New President Amid Budget Crisis.** In response to widespread dissatisfaction with the interim administration and perceived inaction from the CSU system, the SSU Academic Senate adopted a resolution to nominate a new campus president, guided by the FUSE principle (Forever United for Sonoma Excellence)—a call for community-based academic leadership.

Election Process Overview:

- The Academic Senate opened a nomination period upon passage of the resolution.
- A campus-wide faculty vote was scheduled two weeks later.
- If no candidate received more than 50% of the vote, a runoff between the top two vote-getters would be held.
- Candidates were invited to submit public statements and participate in campus forums.
- The final nominee would be endorsed by the Academic Senate and recommended to the CSU Board of Trustees, Governor, and Chancellor for appointment.

On May 11, 2025, in the first round, SSU faculty voted Professors Lynn Cominsky and Tim Wandling as candidates in a runoff for the next President of Sonoma State University. This unprecedented action reflects a strong desire among faculty and the broader campus community to take ownership of SSU's future, restore shared governance, and ensure that academic values remain at the heart of university leadership.

However, the Board of Trustees is going ahead with its standard procedure for selecting a campus President, involving a trustees committee collaborating with a campus advisory committee.

## Cal Poly Humboldt Launches 'Green & Gold Guarantee' to Ease Tuition Burden.

Starting fall 2025, Cal Poly Humboldt will offer the Green & Gold Guarantee, a last-dollar aid program that covers remaining tuition and mandatory fees for new, in-state students after federal and state aid is applied. The initiative aims to reduce financial uncertainty and encourage enrollment, particularly among low-income and first-generation students. Fresno State's similar program provided

grants from \$70 to \$3,300 to 111 students in the first year. Humboldt estimates that up to 2,000 students could benefit annually, with an average gap of \$200. The launch comes as Humboldt works to reverse long-term enrollment declines. Despite a recent 5% uptick, enrollment remains over 30% below 2015 levels. The program's first year will be funded through a one-time vendor contract, then sustained by tuition revenue at an estimated \$82,000 annually. Still, some current students are skeptical. "Continuing students feel left behind," said Mary Mangubat of Students for Quality Education. "Many can't afford to stay and end up transferring."

## Trump Administration Slashes Department of Education Workforce

In a sweeping move just two months into his presidency, President Trump laid off over 1,300 employees at the U.S. Department of Education, cutting nearly half the agency's workforce. The action is seen by many as the first major step toward Trump's campaign promise to downsize or eliminate the department. Now, the department's future appears uncertain. While a complete shutdown would require congressional approval, this round of cuts has already weakened the agency's capacity to monitor student achievement and enforce civil rights laws—two of its core responsibilities. Advocates fear the cuts could leave underserved students with fewer protections and resources, while supporters argue the agency has become bloated and inefficient. This marks a pivotal shift in federal education policy. More changes may be coming—and their impact on students, equity, and access will be closely watched.

## Ending Fragmentation in California's Higher Education System.

California stands alone as the only state without a dedicated coordinating body for higher education. Without a unified structure—no statewide governing board, department, or interagency council—programs remain siloed, disconnected from one another and from the needs of Californians. The result? Wasted resources, unfilled jobs, and millions of people locked out of opportunity.

At the onset of the pandemic, more than 5 million Californians planned to enroll in

(Continued on page 8)

# Summer Book Reviews

## By Sherry Keith, Prof. Emerita of History, SFSU

**Belan, William L. *My Stroke: A Pathway to Recovery and Discovery*. With Joseph E. Schubert. Kindle Direct Publishing, GW Press, 2024.**

William L. Belan is professor emeritus of music at Cal State LA. Dr. Belan's story begins, "December 20, 2021, my wife, my two daughters and I were taking an Uber to Los Angeles...When the driver pulled into the airport, my eyes were opened to the beginning of my stroke..." The threat of a stroke may menace many CSU-ERFSA members. The importance of Belan's story is his recovery.

Moving from *doing* in the world, as many of us have spent our lives, to *being* in the world was part of Belan's post stroke transition and recovery process. Rather than go into the details of this experience, Belan was reborn. "Rebirth began with what felt like new emotional and new perception."

*My Stroke* transcends memoir moving into the realm of a philosophical perspective on a traumatic event. Without giving away his secrets, I encourage you to read this remarkable story, before you or one of

your close friends or companions come face to face with a stroke.

**Winawer, Melodie. *The Scribe of Siena*. Touchstone 2017.**

A time travel novel into the past, with Beatrice, a neurosurgeon, who finds herself transported to Siena Italy in 1346 just before the Black Plague is about decimate most of Europe. There she meets an artist, Gabriele, with whom she falls in love. Her dual awareness of life in both the 21st century and medieval Italy provides a fascinating contrast of experiences and perceptions, many of which challenge contemporary ideas about this period in Italian history, frequently referred to as the "Dark Ages."

Beatrice has no control over when or how she might move from one historical era to another. Her growing attachment to Gabriele, his family and other friends she makes in 14th century Siena are compelling her to stay in the past. This novel, very well researched, with compelling characters and contrasting insights into the past and present, is a fascinating read. Highly recommended!

## Legislative Report

(Continued from page 7)

college within two years. Yet far too many—particularly Latino, Black, Native American, first-generation students, low-wage workers, and parents—faced significant barriers that the state's fragmented access programs failed to overcome. Meanwhile, over \$1 billion in education and workforce development funds go unused each year. Without coordination, programs that could reduce the cost of college and support economic mobility remain inaccessible. Californians searching for training and career advancement often can't navigate the maze of disjointed systems. And employers across the state are left struggling to find the skilled workers they need.

This fragmentation fuels persistent inequality. For those living on the margins, the cost of college—a proven path to upward mobility—can feel insurmountable.

While over 100 public programs exist to help defray costs, the lack of alignment means those who need them most often never benefit.

Momentum is building behind a solution, the California Education Interagency Council. This new body would bring together leaders across education, workforce, and economic development sectors to align programs and funding streams, build clearer pathways for students and adult learners, meet California's evolving workforce needs, and ensure public programs reach the people they're designed to serve.

AB 95 would establish the council and was approved by the Assembly Committee on Higher Education and referred to the Committee on Appropriations, where it is in the suspense file. Articles suggest that it may be created in a budget trailer bill this year.

## From the President

(Continued from page 2)

Ted Anagnoson, provides wonderful input and support and is an enthusiastic supporter of the members of CSU-ERFSA.

I wish you a happy and healthy summer season. The executive committee will meet this summer, and the next State Council meeting will be in October. Merry Pawlowski, our executive director, will be organizing the State Council meeting, and further information will be available as that process begins.

Sincerely,

Sue Holl

Professor Emerita of Materials Science  
California State University, Sacramento  
[sueh@csus.edu](mailto:sueh@csus.edu)

## This Year's COLA

(Continued from page 3)

3%, 4%, or 5%)

- The year you retired

For CSU employees, the COLA will depend on the year of retirement. If you retired between 1965 and 1986, the COLA is 2.95%. Those who retired from 1987 to 2023 will see 2.0%. Those who retired in 2024 are not eligible for a COLA this year.

### Pocket Calendar

The pocket calendar is currently being sent **ONLY** to those who have opted in - please notify the office at the email, phone, or address on page 2 if you would like to continue receiving the calendar.

**However, if you have opted in already, you do not need to opt in again. You will remain on the list to receive the calendar.**

# ASCSU Report: The May Revise, Salaries, Elections

By Jerald Schutte, CSU Northridge, Emeriti Academic Senator

The Academic Senate of CSU met on Thursday and Friday May 8-9, 2025, in Long Beach both in person and by hybrid online. The meeting received reports from the ASCSU President and chairs of the various committees of the Senate. Conversations spanned many dimensions, incorporating Chancellor Garcia, Deputy Vice Chancellors Evans and Perez, California Faculty Association Chair Charles Toombs, and California State Student Association President Tara al-Rehani, among others. Of the many discussions, the following were the most prominent.

**CSU Budget and Finance.** The system has been awaiting the Governor’s May revise. Initially, the January proposed state budget left a \$375 million shortfall for the CSU, having a traumatic effect on many campuses. However, the May revise, released on May 14th, has reduced the CSU shortfall from 7.95% to 3% (\$375 million to \$144 million). Nevertheless, campuses such as Sonoma State University have done away with all athletic involvement in NCAA sports, eliminated departments, and dismissed 100 faculty as a response to budget cuts. Moreover, at the Federal level, Pell grants are being revised, requiring 15, rather than 12-units, to receive a full Pell grant, Grants and contracts are being reviewed for potential denial, and international students risk deportation (of the 70 CSU deportation notices, 68 were rescinded but the process remains in effect).

**CFA Salary Negotiations.** CFA President Toombs reported the Chancellor’s Office and the bargaining arm of the CFA are locked in setting the parameters for negotiation. CFA wants open access to their members in real time. The Chancellor’s Office wants a closed meeting. However, even if settled, there appear to be no resources for salary increases.

**CSU Strategic Plan.** Using a third party organization for consultation (SOVA, a strategic planning consultancy), the Chancellor’s Office is examining strategies for re-examining long term CSU goals. Under a particular strategy entitled “The Year of Engagement,” several directions are emerging. One seeks to expand the traditional attendance demographics to

include life-long enrollment. Another is to conform majors to better represent employment opportunities. Still another is to examine the roll of collaboration and AI in co-curriculum and intra-campus administration. A survey was conducted across 23 campuses and 30,000 faculty. Results demonstrated collaborative learning and capstone research are the predominant goals.

**CSSA.** President elect Tara Al-Rehani, CSSA liaison to the ASCSU, reported that their CSU systemwide student organization is joining the United States Student Association (USSA) to further conversations on free speech and fiscal cuts. It was reported Katie Karoon (Northridge) is the new Vice President-elect. Priorities include supporting trans students and amending the CSSA constitution to advocate for non-discrimination. A Solidarity Task Force was formed to allow CSSA to think of ways to provide integration across the system. They also reported a perceived lack responses from the Chancellor, activism and focus on scope of leadership development, and advocacy within the administration guidelines. Priorities going forward include budget advocacy, Title IX monitoring, and attention paid to allocation of resources.

**ASCSU Elections.** Elections were held for the 2025-2026 executive positions. Elizebeth Boyd (Chico) was re-elected President of the ASCSU. Adam Swenson (Northridge) was re-elected Vice President; Tracy Dawn Hamilton (Sacramento), Secretary, and Nola Butler-Byrd (SDSU) and Dana Nakano (Stanislaus), members at large

**ASCSU Resolutions.** Ten second readings and five first reading resolutions were passed, including:

- “Urging Caution in the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence,”
- Support for Continued Funding for Teacher Credential Students Affected by Federal Changes to DEI Priorities
- Recommendations Regarding Lower Division General Education
- AB 1705 and Community College STEM Student Choice in the Mathematics Entry Point

• Equity, Diversity, Justice, and Inclusion Strategic Action Plan of the Academic Senate of the California State University

• A Higher Education (AAC&U) coalition to combat undue government intrusion.

Details can be reviewed at <https://tinyurl.com/78y8uvwd>

## CSU-ERFSA New Members

A very warm welcome to our newest CSU-ERFSA members:

**Bakersfield** – John R. Tarjan\*

**Channel Islands** – Tia Clarke

**Dominguez Hills** – Susan Needham

**East Bay** – Donna L. Wiley

**Fresno** – Kimberley Smith

**Los Angeles** – Judy Olson

**Long Beach** – Alan F. Rifkin

**Pomona** – Gwen H. Urey

**Sacramento** – Linda C. Buckley  
Vahl Scott Gordon  
Genevieve Sparks

**San Diego** – John Abraham

**San Francisco** – Zelinda Zingaro

**San Jose** – Billie Jo (BJ) Grosvenor

**San Luis Obispo** – Denise H. Daniels  
Garland Durham

**Stanislaus** – Trudia S. Pauley

\* Indicates lifetime member

# Book Review: *Breaking the Age Code*, by Dr. Becca Levy

## Reviewed by Robert H. Girling, Ph.D.

When I was in my twenties—full of energy, idealism, and terrible fashion choices—my Aunt Doreen used to love reminding me of something I said back then. With a mischievous smile, she'd lean in and say, "Do you remember what you told me years ago?"

I'd sigh. I knew what was coming.

"You said, 'I don't trust anyone over thirty!'" she'd laugh.

Groan. "Seriously? Did I really say that?"

"Oh, you did," she'd grin. "And you meant it."

Back then, I believed youth had the monopoly on innovation, energy, and relevance. Aging? That was a one-way ticket to irrelevance, orthopedic shoes, and forgetting why you walked into a room. But now, with a few more decades of mileage under my belt, I realize how hilariously wrong I was.

In *Breaking the Age Code*, Yale's Dr. Becca Levy shows how our beliefs about aging shape how we actually age. Her research could be summarized like this: "Think young, live long."

### Some myths she busts:

- Cognitive decline is inevitable – Not so fast. People with positive views of aging think more clearly for longer.
- Creativity fades – Tell that to Maya Angelou, Georgia O'Keeffe, or MIT's Mildred Dresselhaus, who was still innovating while many of us are losing our keys.
- Aging = loneliness – Actually, older adults often have deeper relationships and higher emotional intelligence. Also, better snacks.

**Levy's big finding?** People with positive beliefs about aging live 7.5 years longer than those with negative ones. That's more than giving up smoking, and way easier than CrossFit.

We live in a culture that treats aging like a software glitch: something to be fixed, paused, or rebooted with enough green juice and yoga. Our society practically canonizes youth, while elders get typecast in commercials for arthritis cream and stair-

lifts. But here's the plot twist: elders are awesome. They're not just old—they're bold, wise, and often hilarious.

Across cultures and throughout history, older adults have been seen as mentors, visionaries, and carriers of knowledge (and sometimes mints in their pockets). Yet today, we too often push them to the sidelines—when really, they should be calling the plays.

Imagine a world where aging isn't seen as a downward spiral but as a launchpad for new chapters, deeper insights, and meaningful contributions. Aging is inevitable—yes. But decline? Optional. Personally, I've found these years some of the most exciting and impactful of my life. Through my work as Legislative Director for CSU-ERFSA and mentoring nonprofits through SCORE, I've learned that relevance doesn't retire. It just gets better at pacing itself.

If I could sit my younger self down—ideally without him rolling his eyes—I'd say: "Look, you adorable, arrogant twenty-something... Aging isn't scary. It's liberating." And to Aunt Doreen, I'd add: "Thanks for laughing. You were right."

**The Problem with Ageism (Besides Being Rude).** Let's be honest: aging in America is treated like a punchline. We're bombarded with "anti-aging" ads—because apparently the worst thing you can do is look like you've lived a full life. Older workers are often pushed out, and Hollywood thinks anyone over 50 is either a grandparent, a wizard, or asleep.

These stereotypes don't just hurt feelings. They hurt health. Studies show that internalizing negative beliefs about aging leads to more stress, faster cognitive decline, and even a shorter lifespan. It's like your brain hears "you're over the hill" and responds, "Okay, guess I'll nap forever."

Now contrast that with countries like Japan, where there's an actual holiday—Keirō no Hi, or Respect for the Aged Day. Yes, a whole day to honor elders instead of asking them to update their will. In Okinawa, seniors are celebrated for their wisdom and purpose—and not coincidentally, they live longer, healthier lives. Indigenous communities see older genera-

tions as knowledge-keepers and culture carriers—not burdens.

**Science Says: Aging Is (Mostly) in Your Head, So... How Do We Rewrite the Script?** We need a total culture shift—and some action. Here are a few ideas:

- Healthcare Reform: Let's train doctors to see older adults as whole people, not just a list of prescriptions and knee complaints.
- Media Makeover: More vibrant, wise, hilarious elders on screen, please. Less "I've fallen and I can't get up."
- Policy Upgrades: The U.S. should ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of Older Persons. It's about time.
- Schools as Bridges: We need more intergenerational learning. Let elders serve as mentors, storytellers, tutors, and the keepers of wisdom (and possibly cookies).

### Proof It Works: Programs That Rock the Age Gap

- Experience Corps (AARP Foundation): Older adults mentor kids in under-resourced schools. Result? Higher literacy for students, longer life and better health for volunteers.
- Foster Grandparents Program: Seniors offer love and homework help. Win-win.
- Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes (OLLI): Retired pros teaching at universities? Yes, please.
- Generations United: Intergenerational art, music, storytelling... Basically, the coolest mash-up since avocados met toast.

Bringing older adults into schools doesn't just help students—it changes how we see aging. It builds empathy, understanding, and maybe even helps teenagers put down their phones (no promises).

**Let's Age Like We Mean It.** The real takeaway from Dr. Levy's work? Aging isn't just something that happens to us. It's something we shape—with our attitudes, our policies, and our culture.

So next time you catch yourself groaning about getting older, remember this: With the right mindset, aging is less about aches and more about breakthroughs.

I'm about to celebrate my 80th trip around

(Continued on page 12)

# Long-Term Care: Scandals Among LTC Operators in CA

## By Ted Anagnoson, Editor, CSULA

The *Los Angeles Times* in March 2025 published a long article about scandals in the congregate living facilities area in California. When operators of assisted living facilities are decertified and prohibited from operating assisted living facilities by the Department of Social Services, they are not prohibited from operating other facilities, such as home health agencies, hospices, or facilities for developmentally disabled persons. The latter facilities are regulated by the Department of Public Health. While the departments talk to each other and appear to share information, a decertification by one does not apply to facilities regulated by the other.

The causes for the particular decertifications investigated in the article included situations where rats had infested the facility, where seniors had wandered off without supervision, where medications were not properly administered, and where the emergency pull cords in some of the rooms didn't work.

The Department of Social Services oversees more than 12,000 facilities dealing with seniors in California. There is, however, no easy way to obtain information about any specific operator. *The LA Times* obtained its information through a public records request, something that most people are not able or willing to undertake. Additional legwork was necessary to confirm the information obtained.

The Department of Social Services shares the information with the Department of Public Health, which has the authority to undertake its own investigations but is not required under state law to take action. The result is the situation that troubles advocates: operators who have been excluded by Social Services can and do still run facilities overseen by Public Health.

Your editor's spouse is in a board and care home for those with dementia. Knowing of these sorts of problems, he was reluctant to look at smaller homes, which can be less expensive than the larger facilities, but his spouse's doctor, a board-certified gerontologist, had previous patients in this particular home and others under the same owner. Checking with other adults who are in the same predicament with

their spouses and seeing their choices is another good source of information.

At a time when the proportion and number of Californians over 65 is expected to grow substantially, finding trustworthy care is likely to become more and more difficult. According to *The Times*, the Public Policy Institute of California estimates that the 14% of Californians over 65 in 2020 will increase to 22% in 2040.

The whole article can be accessed at <https://tinyurl.com/2whxdtmp>. If you cannot get access, write to *The Reporter* editor at [tanagnoson@gmail.com](mailto:tanagnoson@gmail.com), and I will send you a copy.

**CalPERS Long-term Care Program Benefit Increase Option Offer.** We got

the aforementioned item a few weeks ago. It's CalPERS's way of allowing those of us who didn't have the money to purchase the inflation-adjusted policy option a way to update our policies to current prices every three or so years.

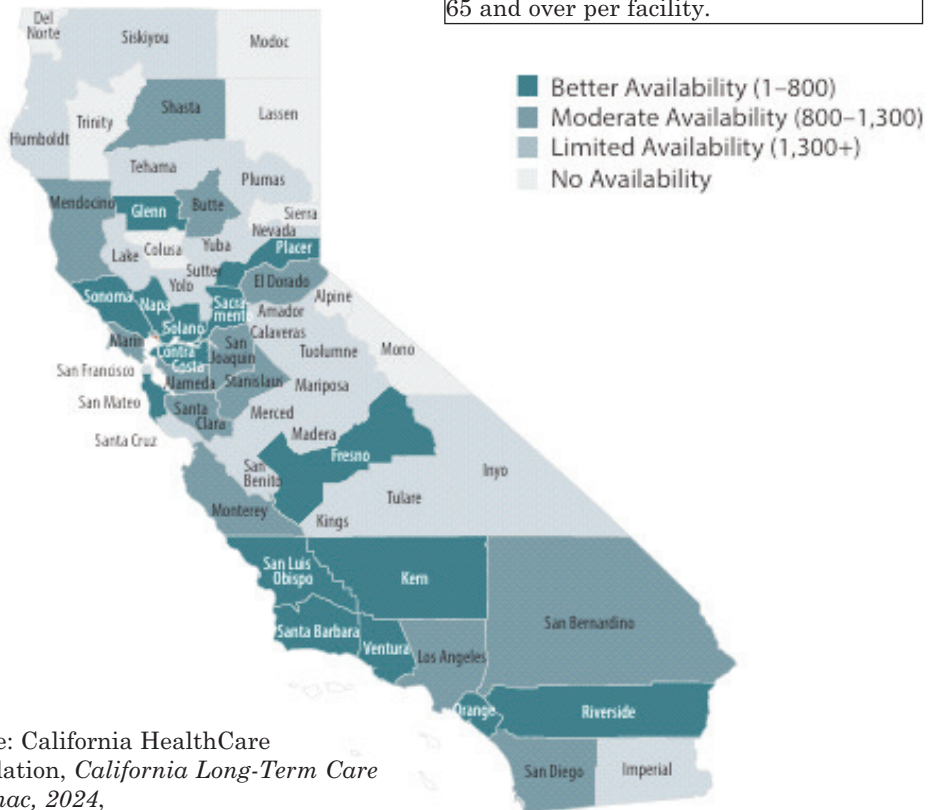
This year your editor received an offer to increase his coverage amounts by 16%, in return for a premium increase of 57%. That's right – fifty-seven, almost a sixty percent premium increase. I won't be accepting this Benefit Increase Option Offer. At some point, it just isn't worth it.

**Will You Need Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS)?** *The Squared Away Blog*, published Thursdays by the

(Continued on page 12)

## Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly, by County California, 2022

POPULATION AGE 65 OR OLDER PER FACILITY



Source: California HealthCare Foundation, *California Long-Term Care Almanac, 2024*, <https://tinyurl.com/mt632h46>.

**CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY  
EMERITUS AND RETIRED FACULTY  
AND STAFF ASSOCIATION**

The Retirement Center  
18111 Nordhoff Street  
Northridge, CA 91330-8339

Address Service Requested

<https://www.csuerfsa.org>

Have you moved? If so, please report your new address to the CSU-ERFSA office at the above address.



**California State University  
Emeritus & Retired Faculty and Staff Association**

**Long-Term Care:  
CalPERS LTC Program**

(Continued from page 11)

Center for Retirement Research at Boston College, published updated charts on the probability you might need LTC. You can find this issue at <https://tinyurl.com/4evseazp>. These figures are updated from those we published in 2021. These data show that only about a fifth of retirees will need no assistance at all during their lives and a fifth will need extensive services. The remaining 60 percent of seniors will have either low (25 percent) or moderate care needs (37 percent). Low intensity is help with one instrumental activity of daily living

**Table 1. Classification of LTSS Severity Based on the Intensity and Duration of Need**

Duration	Intensity		
	Low	Medium	High
Up to 1 year	Minimal	Minimal	Moderate
1-3 years	Minimal	Moderate	Moderate
More than 3 years	Minimal	Severe	Severe

**CSU-ERFSA Calendar of Events**

**August 11, 2025, 10 am - 12 pm - Summer Executive Committee meeting.** On Zoom.

**Aug. 29 - Sept. 29 - CalPERS Board of Administration Election.** Two seats are to be contested. See story page 3.

**Thursday, October 30, 2025 - CSU-ERFSA Research Grant Applications due. 2 p.m.**

(IADL). Moderate is needing help with one activity of daily living (ADL). High is having dementia or needing help with 2 or more ADLs. We don't have room here, but in the next issue we'll do a comprehensive report on ADLs - info you should know.

**Book Review**

(Continued from page 10)

the sun, and I can confidently say—I've never felt more ready for what's next.

Because let's face it: if aging means more wisdom, purpose, and maybe an early bird special or two... I'm all in.

Robert H. Girling, an experienced traveler and author of Lifescapes, lives in Laguna Beach and serves as Legislative Director of the California State University Emeritus and Retired Faculty and Staff Association. He has no plans to slow down—and plenty of stories to tell.

**Table 2. Lifetime Probability of a 65-Year-Old Needing LTC, by Duration and Intensity**

Duration	Intensity			
	None	Low	Medium	High
Up to 1 year		10%	5%	14%
1-3 years	18%	5	3	20
More than 3 years		5	2	18

Source: Center for Retirement Research at Boston College.