



ASSEMBLYMEMBER

**Patrick O'Donnell**

DISTRICT 70



## **P R E S S   R E L E A S E**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**CONTACT:** Paige Pelonis

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(562) 429-0470

### **O'Donnell Closer to Opening Door to Higher Education for Students**

#### *Assembly Education Committee passes AB 1951, Pathways to College Act*

**(SACRAMENTO)** – The Assembly Education Committee voted (X-X) Wednesday in favor of Assembly Bill 1951, authored by Assemblymember Patrick O'Donnell (D – Long Beach) to allow school districts to offer college admissions tests to students for free during the school day in lieu of the state-required 11<sup>th</sup> grade assessment.

"AB 1951 is about expanding access to higher education," Assemblymember O'Donnell said. "Allowing school districts the flexibility to decide the most meaningful assessments for their students will increase the number of students going to college. As a parent, a teacher, and Chair of the Assembly Education Committee, I believe AB 1951 is a win for school districts and, most importantly, a win for our students."

The Long Beach Unified School District currently offers the SAT for free to students during the school day, and LBUSD Superintendent Chris Steinhauser testified in support of AB 1951 at the committee hearing:

"Our school district strongly supports AB 1951 because it eliminates historic barriers to higher education," LBUSD Superintendent Christopher J. Steinhauser said. "If more students can take a college admissions test at no cost, then more students will gain access to personalized, free practice tools, and more students will earn admission and scholarships to colleges and universities."

The measure also has the support of numerous school districts and is sponsored by the California School Boards Association. A dozen other states have used or plan to use a college entrance exam as an alternative assessment to meet state and federal accountability requirements for grade 11 testing.

The bill now moves to the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

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*Assemblymember Patrick O'Donnell represents the 70<sup>th</sup> Assembly District which includes Long Beach, Signal Hill, San Pedro and Catalina Island.*

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