

**Assembly Concurrent Resolution**

**No. 34**

**Introduced by Assembly Member Liu**

March 3, 2005

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Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 34—Relative to public higher education facilities.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 34, as introduced, Liu. Public higher education facilities: space utilization standards.

This measure would declare that current higher space utilization standards are obsolete and no longer relevant to the actual space needs of the California Community Colleges, the California State University, and the University of California. The measure would make various recommendations with the goal of providing the state's public higher education institutions with the most effective plan for physical facilities development. The measure would recommend that the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) propose to the Legislature and the Governor, prior to January 20, 2006, a set of contemporary space allocation policies for the state's public higher education systems. The measure would further recommend that CPEC and the Legislative Analyst's Office jointly establish and maintain a Space and Usage Policy Advisory Committee to remain apprised of future developments in this area and to inform legislative deliberations on public higher education facilities.

Fiscal committee: yes.

- 1 WHEREAS, The three public segments of California higher
- 2 education have about 200,000,000 gross square feet of buildings
- 3 on their campuses, representing an investment in these buildings
- 4 that exceeds \$60,000,000,000; and

1 WHEREAS, Assembly Concurrent Resolution 151 of the 1970  
2 Regular Session (Resolution Chapter 248 of the Statutes of 1970)  
3 was the first action by the Legislature to establish space  
4 utilization standards for higher education; it established a  
5 standard for classroom availability between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00  
6 p.m. (compared to all earlier standards, which were based on  
7 room availability between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.); and

8 WHEREAS, The Supplemental Report to the Budget Act of  
9 1973 adopted utilization standards for teaching laboratories to be  
10 available between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.; and

11 WHEREAS, The Community College Construction Act of  
12 1980 authorized the Board of Governors of the California  
13 Community Colleges (CCC) to establish standards for  
14 community college facilities. Pursuant to this authority, the CCC  
15 established regulations providing for community college  
16 classrooms and teaching laboratories to be available for  
17 assignment 70 hours per week; and

18 WHEREAS, The Budget Act of 1987 appropriated funds to  
19 the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) to  
20 conduct a study of the utilization of higher education  
21 instructional facilities. The CPEC study recommended  
22 utilization, varied by time and day, that would result in 30 hours  
23 per week of instructional classroom utilization. The study  
24 recommended varied utilization standards for the three segments  
25 and different types of laboratories. The Legislature took no  
26 action based on the recommendations in this report; and

27 WHEREAS, The state's current utilization standards are the  
28 standards approved by the Legislature in 1970 for classrooms of  
29 the California State University and the University of California,  
30 and in 1973 for teaching laboratories, and the standards  
31 established in the California Code of Regulations for the  
32 community colleges; and

33 WHEREAS, During the 30 years that have elapsed since the  
34 research, development, and adoption of the existing higher  
35 education space utilization standards, the manner in which  
36 educational services are provided has changed dramatically.  
37 Essential functions, such as the need to provide students with  
38 support services, as well as the use of the computer and  
39 media-assisted learning, are not recognized in these standards.  
40 Cost-effective building design and usage, and contemporary

1 educational program needs, are not consistent with these  
2 half-century-old planning mandates; and

3 WHEREAS, California still relies on antiquated space  
4 allocation formulas and mandates, while the rest of the nation has  
5 adopted permissive guidelines and general operating parameters  
6 in space planning. Virtually all of the research over the past 15  
7 years--and the actual practices of higher education  
8 institutions--show that flexible space and usage guidelines  
9 provide the most cost-efficient and user-friendly approach for  
10 meeting the changing needs of California's college and university  
11 students; now, therefore, be it

12 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*  
13 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature of the State of California  
14 declares that current space utilization standards are obsolete and  
15 are no longer relevant to the actual space needs of the California  
16 Community Colleges, the California State University, and the  
17 University of California; and be it further

18 *Resolved*, That, in order to provide the state's public higher  
19 education institutions with the most effective plan for physical  
20 facilities development, the Legislature recommends all of the  
21 following:

22 (a) The establishment of a limited set of contemporary space  
23 allocation policies for the state's public higher education systems  
24 based on national research, actual use patterns, and best  
25 practices.

26 (b) That these policies be used as "guidelines," with the  
27 flexibility provided for institutions to plan and operate physical  
28 facilities in ways that are both cost-effective and  
29 student-centered.

30 (c) That the Legislature maintain oversight of higher education  
31 facilities development through the annual budget allocation  
32 process, whereby each project can be evaluated based on these  
33 guidelines, the merits of the proposal, comparisons to peer  
34 institutions and projects, and relative to state priorities.

35 (d) That, prior to January 20, 2006, the California  
36 Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) shall propose to  
37 the Legislature and the Governor a set of contemporary space  
38 allocation policies for the state's public higher education systems.

39 (e) That the Legislative Analyst's Office and CPEC jointly  
40 establish and maintain a Space and Usage Policy Advisory

1 Committee to remain apprised of future developments in this area  
2 and to inform legislative deliberations on public higher education  
3 facilities; and be it further  
4 *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit  
5 copies of this resolution to the Director of the California  
6 Postsecondary Education Commission, the Legislative Analyst,  
7 and to each member of the Board of Governors of the California  
8 Community Colleges, the Trustees of the California State  
9 University, and the Regents of the University of California.

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