*The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.*

*Governor*

*State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814*

*Dear Governor Brown:*

*I am writing to you as ( CEO or Other Title of X company?  Member of X organization?) to urge you to lend your support to and sign SB 850, the community college baccalaureate pilot.*

*SB 850, authored by Senator Marty Block along with a bi-partisan group of co-authors, will establish a pilot program for community colleges to offer bachelor’s degrees in selected workforce fields. One of the primary missions of community colleges is workforce preparation.  Community colleges and their students are being increasingly challenged by the fact that a growing number of  workforce fields now require or will soon be requiring baccalaureate-level preparation where in the past the associate degree had been the entry-level requirement. At the same time, California’s public universities either do not offer bachelor’s degree programs in these fields or lack the capacity to serve students in adequate numbers. As a result, California’s students and the California public face serious challenges in becoming competitive for jobs.*

*Twenty-one states have already faced this problem and have authorized community colleges to offer bachelor’s degrees in a limited number of workforce fields. Access, affordability, and high quality characterize these community college programs, and research shows that the state and local economies have benefited from this adjustment.  The community colleges have kept their primary mission intact while addressing this specific need in several workforce-training programs.  At the very least, California should study the benefits of such an adjustment, and the pilot project proposed by SB 850 will do just that, by enabling fifteen community college districts to each develop one baccalaureate program, the results of which will be reported to the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office and the legislature.*

*Please approve SB 850.  Thank you.*

*Sincerely*

*XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX*

Pete Vernazza
De Anza College Automotive Technology