

Date of Hearing: April 28, 2021

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Lorena Gonzalez, Chair

AB 39 (Chau) – As Amended March 25, 2021

Policy Committee:	Higher Education	Vote:	8 - 4
	Natural Resources		8 - 0

Urgency: No      State Mandated Local Program: No      Reimbursable: No

**SUMMARY:**

This bill allows the Regents of the University of California (UC) to establish the California-China Climate Institute (CCCI). CCCI is to be in partnership with Tsinghua University and other entities in California and China. The duties of CCCI are to include (a) the fostering of collaboration to shape national and subnational climate policy and advance the goals of the Paris Agreement and; (b) the advancement of policy research on climate issues such as low-carbon transportation and zero-emission vehicles, climate adaptation and resilience and long term goal setting and policy enforcement.

**FISCAL EFFECT:**

Minor and absorbable costs to UC. CCCI currently is funded with philanthropic funds. (However, codifying CCCI in statute could help legitimize future GF requests for support of the center.)

**COMMENTS:**

- 1) **Purpose.** According to the author, “[CCCI] can be dissolved despite its important research and without any involvement of the Legislature that has placed a high priority on addressing climate changes issues. AB 39 will formalize in statute the CCCI to make this important research institute permanent.”
- 2) **Background.** CCCI was created in the fall of 2019 through private agreements. Former Governor Brown helped launch CCCI and is its current chair in partnership with China’s Special Representative for Climate Change Affairs, Xie Zhenhua. CCCI is based at the UC, Berkeley and is supported by philanthropic funds. CCCI currently receives a 24 month grant of \$2 million from the Hewlett Foundation to fund its operations. The grant is set to expire in July 2021. In addition, CCCI receives other project-based grants.

This bill seeks to formalize CCCI in statute and codifies its current partnerships and duties. Governor Brown is a vocal supporter of this bill.

- 3) **Funding of UC Research Centers.** The Legislature has provided earmarked GF to centers at UC for research in specific areas. For example, in the 2016-17 budget, the state provided the UC Firearm Violence Research Center, based at UC Davis’ Sacramento campus, with \$5 million GF over five years.

- 4) **Prior Legislation.** AB 2585 (Chau), of the 2019-20 Legislative Session, was identical to this bill. The bill was held in the Assembly Higher Education Committee.

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