

REMARKS TO THE UCLA BUDGET FORUM

President Robert C. Dynes

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[President Dynes delivered these closing remarks to a statewide forum on California budget forums hosted by the UC Office of the President, the California Policy Research Center, and UCLA.]

Thank you to everyone for the thoughtful and insightful conversation today. I also want to give a special thank you to UCLA for hosting; to the California Policy Research Center for organizing the discussions; and to our moderators and panelists for their participation today.

This is a critical conversation for California to be having, and the University of California is proud to be convening it.

Let me also say how pleased I am to be joined by the leaders of the other two segments of public higher education in California, Charlie Reed of CSU and Tom Nussbaum of the California Community Colleges. I think it's vital that our state's three systems of public higher education work together to address common challenges and pursue common goals. I'm heartened at the participation of the other segments here today, and on behalf of UC, I pledge to keep this cooperation and dialogue going.

Today we've explored the sources of the California budget crisis, possible reforms in the budget and taxation process, and the role of higher education in addressing the many challenges facing the state of California. I hope this conversation is put to good use. I hope the discussion will help decision makers in Sacramento sort through the very difficult challenges they are confronting.

I truly believe that California, for all its troubles and controversies, remains the envy of the world today. When you travel outside our state and tell people you're from California, it means something very special. California is recognized the world over for embodying the values of innovation, risk-taking, diversity, tolerance, and entrepreneurship. These are the things that have made our state an international economic leader, and that have made California such an interesting and exciting place to live.

We need to keep that in mind. I think it's very important that we make the right investments today -- even in a time of fiscal contraction -- to help sustain that "California spirit," that California leadership status, into the future.

Speaking from my own perspective, I think that investment includes higher education. I think the future strength of California's economy absolutely depends on it.

This forum today has given us many suggestions for how we might consider accomplishing this, and I thank all of you for your contributions here today.