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April 21, 2011

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Executive Director

The Honorable Alan Lowenthal
Chair, Senate Education Committee
State Capitol, Room 2032
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SUPPORT FOR SENATE BILL 885
Hearing Date: April 27, 2011

Dear Senator Lowenthal:

The Little Hoover Commission urges the Senate Education Committee to approve Senate Bill 885, which is scheduled to be heard on April 27, 2011. This measure authorizes key education and workforce entities to enter into a joint powers agreement to facilitate the implementation of a comprehensive student database.

The Commission supports this measure based on findings and recommendations in its reports, *Educational Governance and Accountability: Taking the Next Step* (May 2008) and *Career Technical Education: Creating Options for High School Success* (November 2007). In these reports, the Commission described the important role of a comprehensive student data system and urged the state to champion the use of data to drive instructional improvement and policy and financial decisions. The Commission has heard repeatedly that the state needs to better understand what happens to individual students as they move through the education system into the workforce. The potential for this kind of analysis can help policy-makers make more efficient, evidence-based investments in education and other government programs.

The sharing of data among the disparate but inextricably linked education and workforce agencies is a critical component to speed the success of this effort. SB 885 takes steps toward establishing a governance structure that can help ensure that the data system is as robust and comprehensive as envisioned and needed. For these reasons, the Little Hoover Commission urges the Senate Education Committee to approve the measure. If you have any questions, or if I can be of further assistance, please contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stuart Drown".

Stuart Drown
Executive Director

c: Members, Senate Education Committee