

The Regents of the University of California

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

May 17, 2023

The Public Engagement and Development Committee met on the above date at UCLA Luskin Conference Center, Los Angeles campus and by teleconference meeting conducted in accordance with California Government Code §§ 11133.

Members present: Regents Hernandez, Kounalakis, Reilly, and Timmons; Ex officio member Leib; Advisory members Raznick, Steintrager, and Tesfai; Chancellors Block, Larive, Muñoz, and Wilcox; Staff Advisor Lakireddy

In attendance: Regent Chu, Assistant Secretary Bricker, Deputy General Counsel Drumm, Provost Newman, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Brostrom, Vice President Humiston, and Recording Secretary Li

The meeting convened at 10:15 a.m. with Committee Chair Reilly presiding.

Committee Chair Reilly announced that Michael Reese had returned to the University to serve as Interim Senior Vice President of External Relations and Communications, pending approval by the Regents later at this meeting. Prior to his retirement, Mr. Reese had worked at the Office of the President and at UC Merced. Mr. Reese replied that he has returned to a established public engagement program and thanked Committee Chair Reilly and the Regents for their efforts.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the meeting of March 16, 2023 were approved, Regents Hernandez, Kounalakis, Leib, Reilly, and Timmons voting “aye.”¹

2. CITRUS CLONAL PROTECTION PROGRAM – DEFENDING AND ADVANCING CALIFORNIA’S CITRUS INDUSTRY

[Background material was provided to Regents in advance of the meeting, and a copy is on file in the Office of the Secretary and Chief of Staff.]

Mr. Michael Reese stated that the Citrus Clonal Protection Program (CCPP) was responsible for protecting the health of California’s extensive collection of citrus varieties and booming citrus industry, and was an example of how UC research and expertise contribute to communities and support industry across the state.

Christine Birdsong, Undersecretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), stated that there were more than 400 specialty crops in the state. She noted that citrus trees grown in California, as well as most of the citrus trees grown in Arizona, Texas,

¹ Roll call vote required by the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act [Government Code § 11123(b)(1)(D)] for all meetings held by teleconference.

Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and some in other countries, could be traced back to the CCPP, which was established in 1957. Citrus accounted for \$3 billion in production value and has created tens of thousands of jobs in California while providing nutritional value around the world. Citrus orchards offered environmental benefits such as providing habitats for wildlife and absorbing carbon. Citrus also served a symbolic role in religious and cultural celebrations. In January, the Sustainable Pest Management Work Group, comprised of representatives from the CDFA, the California Environmental Protection Agency, and the California Department of Pesticide Regulation, issued a report that underscored the importance of the “systems” approach to pest prevention. This approach included exclusion, detection, eradication, control, identification, public outreach, and scientific support, the most important being scientific support and exclusion. The CCPP and CDFA have been longtime collaborators in identifying and preventing the introduction of citrus diseases into California. About ten years ago, CDFA established the Citrus Nursery Stock Pest Cleanliness Program using the diagnostic protocols developed by the CCPP. This program’s efforts protected nurseries from Huanglongbing (HLB), a citrus disease, before psyllid vectors spread across the state, and achieved 100 percent reduction of viroid pathogens in citrus nursery stock. Continued investment in the CCPP saved the citrus industry millions of dollars per year by preventing the introduction of new diseases into California and providing clean budwood to citrus growers. Ms. Birdsong thanked the University for this important work and for its partnership with CDFA.

UC Riverside Professor Georgios Vidalakis, Director of the CCPP, shared that the first parent navel orange tree was introduced to Riverside from Brazil in 1873. The CCPP introduced citrus varieties into California following a quarantine process, maintained mother trees, and distributed materials to growers. Citrus trees grown in California were produced by grafting rootstock seedlings to scion buds and were legally required to originate from the CCPP. About four million trees were grafted per year. Several years ago, for the first time in its history, California produced more citrus than Florida. Mr. Vidalakis presented a graph indicating the decline in citrus production in Florida due to an outbreak of Huanglongbing (HLB), or yellow shoot disease.

The CCPP held one of three permits that allow the introduction of citrus to the U.S. Mr. Vidalakis presented a chart of the CCPP’s program structure. Citrus plants were quarantined at UC Riverside, underwent testing and therapy, and were then transported to the UC Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR) Lindcove Research and Extension Center, where they were distributed. The program distributed plants to 93 commercial users and nearly 8,000 non-commercial users in the state, and has been upgrading its facilities and improving its efficiency. Providing the public with access to healthy plants was an important way to prevent disease. Mr. Vidalakis shared the results of testing conducted for the California Citrus Nursery Stock Pest Cleanliness Program. After implementing a high throughput testing model, the citrus viroids rate of infection dropped to zero percent. UC Riverside had a wide range of plant genetic resources in addition to citrus, such as the cowpea plant, which was a significant food source in Africa. Mr. Vidalakis believed that these genetic resources presented revenue opportunities that could fund infrastructure to support programs like the CCPP in the long term.

Regent Hernandez asked whether HLB had been introduced into California. Mr. Vidalakis replied that, following the discovery of HLB in Florida in 2005, UC representatives traveled to Brazil in 2006 to learn more about the disease. Victoria Hornbaker, Director of the Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Division of CDFA, added that the work of the CCPP enabled CDFA to develop a robust response program that stopped the spread of HLB in residential areas. HLB was first detected in California in 2012, but no commercial tree has been infected with the disease. Mr. Vidalakis shared that, historically, one would have expected an epidemic infecting commercial citrus to occur within four to eight years of detecting an insect vector, but this was not the case anymore. Ms. Hornbaker stated that CDFA and the CCPP were helping other countries develop similar response programs.

Chancellor Wilcox asked about the different strategies used for combating HLB. Mr. Vidalakis replied that the CCPP partnered with UC San Diego to develop predictive modeling. Geneticists were crossing commercial citrus with genotypes that were more tolerant to disease, and entomologists were studying the natural enemies of the psyllids to reduce the use of insecticides. He and other plant pathologists also planned to study the effect of a citrus plant's microbiome on HLB. Viruses could be converted to express antimicrobial proteins, as was done with the citrus tristeza virus. Mr. Vidalakis estimated that, from 2005 to present, over \$1 billion has been invested in HLB research.

Regent Timmons asked if HLB was less likely to spread in Southern California and in the Central Valley due to the drier climate in those areas. Mr. Vidalakis responded that, unlike California, there was no fluctuation in weather in Florida. Ms. Hornbaker stated that some data indicated that the temperature and climate in California were inhospitable to the psyllid, affecting its ability to acquire the HLB bacteria. Flushing patterns in California also slowed disease progression. Mr. Vidalakis noted that insects will overcome, adapt, and adjust.

Regent Timmons asked about Argentine ants. Ms. Hornbaker replied that Argentine ants farmed Asian citrus psyllids for honeydew and protected them from biocontrol agents such as the *Tamarixia radiata*, a tiny stingless wasp. UC has been developing alternative ant control techniques, and homeowners are informed when *Tamarixia radiata* are released.

Chancellor Block asked if grafting was still required given new genetic techniques. Mr. Vidalakis responded in the affirmative. Grafting was needed to harness genetics of species with strong root systems and large, juicy fruit, and the CCPP worked to avoid bud union incompatibility. With grafting, one type of disease-resistant rootstock could be used to grow a variety of citrus species.

Staff Advisor Lakireddy asked how UC Master Gardeners and volunteers were sharing this information with the general public. Mr. Vidalakis replied that Master Gardeners were trusted local voices and had invited experts to speak at their meetings. Vice President Humiston noted that law enforcement in Florida compelled homeowners to remove trees while UC sent Master Gardeners to help homeowners check and remove diseased trees and suggest CCPP varieties. She underscored volunteers' ability to work with communities and derive citizen science from academics.

Committee Chair Reilly asked about opportunities that this work presented. Mr. Vidalakis emphasized the public service aspect of the University's mission and stressed the importance of investing in UC's plant genetic resources for everyone's benefit. He recalled that, according to some commercial growers, companies like Driscoll's and Sun World privatized breeding programs for their crops. The CCPP needed investment in infrastructure, as well as access to more land and facilities for agriculture and research. Mr. Vidalakis shared that he had to advocate for the CCPP budget every year.

Regent Kounalakis asked if citrus trees typically lived as long as the parent navel orange tree, where the parent tree was located, and whether it still produced fruit. She asked how this tree was related to the many citrus varieties. Mr. Vidalakis responded that, in Southern California, trees could survive naturally for over 100 years. Of the three citrus trees that traveled from Brazil to Riverside in the 1800s, one has survived due to intervention by UCR scientists, who transplanted its root system twice. The tree was still in Riverside, surrounded by houses. Mr. Vidalakis explained that each variety had its own mother tree.

Regent Kounalakis asked what was being done to reduce biowaste and to ensure that citrus trees required fewer resources. Mr. Vidalakis replied that, as an example of the research being conducted across UC, the CCPP has been fertilizing mother trees with fallen fruit that has undergone a fermentation process.

3. **ENDORSEMENT OF SB 28, PUBLIC PRESCHOOL, K–12, AND COLLEGE HEALTH AND SAFETY BOND ACT OF 2024**

The President of the University recommended that the Regents preliminarily endorse Senate Bill 28, the Public Preschool, K–12, and College Health and Safety Bond Act of 2024.

[Background material was provided to Regents in advance of the meeting, and a copy is on file in the Office of the Secretary and Chief of Staff.]

Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Brostrom explained that, from the mid-1960s to 2006, the State provided funding for UC's capital outlay needs through general obligation (GO) bonds and lease revenue bonds. Bond acts approved in 2002 and 2004 provided approximately \$345 million per year and were exhausted in 2006. Another bond act, named Proposition 13 on the 2020 ballot, failed to pass. The University had over \$50 billion in unfunded capital needs, and the \$2 billion from Senate Bill (SB) 28 would be allocated to the campuses' highest priorities. With this funding, the University aimed to build better and expanded spaces to support current and future enrollment, improve the safety of existing buildings, and reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions.

Mr. Michael Reese detailed the phases of the campaign. The first phase was securing the passage of the GO bond legislation, and the second phase was communicating to stakeholders and the general public about the legislation and its impact. The third phase was ensuring the passage of the resultant ballot measure, for which the President would seek the Regents' endorsement. The University has not had bond measure funding for the

last 17 years and was challenged to reestablish the tradition of financing capital projects using bond measures. State Senator Steven Glazer and Governor Newsom have championed UC's cause. SB 28, authored by Senator Glazer, was a \$15.5 billion bond act that would allocate \$2 billion to UC and \$2 billion to the California State University, and was scheduled for the March 2024 ballot. Assembly Bill (AB) 247, authored by Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi, was a GO bond bill that would provide an unspecified dollar amount to K-12 and the California Community Colleges. The ballot measure would likely be a combination of the two bills. Per Regents Policy 8301: Policy on Higher Education Bond Measure Information and Advocacy Implementation Plan, the Regents' endorsement of SB 28 would enable UC to move to the second phase of its campaign, which would include the creation of a website on the legislation. Mr. Reese acknowledged the importance of the Alumni Regents in this endeavor. When this legislation becomes a ballot measure, the University may continue to provide information to the public regarding the impact of the GO bond but may not campaign for it. UC staff may participate in campaign activities in their personal capacity.

Regent Kounalakis recognized the leadership of Senator Glazer in identifying deferred maintenance as a serious issue. The University must communicate to voters the importance of supporting public higher education.

Regent-designate Raznick asked how alumni associations could help with the campaign. Mr. Reese replied that the Office of the President (UCOP) would be working closely with alumni associations.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Committee approved the President's recommendation and voted to present it to the Board, Regents Hernandez, Kounalakis, Leib, Reilly, and Timmons voting "aye."

4. **STATE GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS UPDATE**

[Background material was provided to Regents in advance of the meeting, and a copy is on file in the Office of the Secretary and Chief of Staff.]

Mr. Michael Reese introduced Kathleen Fullerton as the new Associate Vice President of State Governmental Relations (SGR) and the first woman to hold this position.

Ms. Fullerton stated that Governor Newsom released the May Revision of the State budget the previous week and that the State Legislature would be making decisions about bills in its suspense files. The Governor projected a \$31.5 billion budget deficit but continued to demonstrate support for the University through his funding Compact with UC. Since Tax Day has been moved to October, total State revenue would not be known when the budget passes in June, and amendments could be passed until the end of the legislative session in September. As a result of this uncertainty, SGR has prioritized advocating for the State's five percent increase per the Compact and would continue to advocate for Regental priorities such as the DDS-ASPIRE program, a new program designed to recruit future dentists from underserved communities. The implementation of a transfer admission

guarantee (TAG) and Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) at UCLA, which the Governor proposed in January, was included in the May Revision as well. Ms. Fullerton noted that Assemblymember Kevin McCarty favored standardizing the transfer process and asked UC to adopt the ADT systemwide. SGR was working with legislators and the Governor's office to reach a compromise.

The Legislature has introduced over 2,900 bills in the first year of the 2023–24 legislative session, and SGR was tracking 294 bills that would have a “significant impact” on UC. The University took an “oppose” position on Assembly Constitutional Amendment (ACA) 6, which would require UC to apply the same labor standards as private employers. SGR argued that this was redundant given existing protections and could have severe unintended consequences. ACA 6 was currently in the suspense file. SB 27, which pertained to covered service contracts under Regents Policy 5402: Policy Generally Prohibiting Contracting for Services, was a reintroduction of last year's SB 1364, which Governor Newsom vetoed. UC would oppose the bill unless it is amended, and State Senator Maria Elena Durazo has accepted the majority of UC's suggested amendments.

Ms. Fullerton shared several UC-sponsored bills. SB 295 would allow UC to establish rules for certain transportation devices and has passed the Senate. SB 633 would authorize UC and the California State University to award DREAM grants and has also passed the Senate. UC did not sponsor but strongly supported AB 1307, which would declare that “social noise” does not have a significant impact on the environment, a response to recent litigation regarding the California Environmental Quality Act. AB 1307 was in its third reading in the Assembly.

Ms. Fullerton thanked the Regents for their participation in the most recent UC Day in Sacramento. Nearly 100 delegates represented all ten campuses and one National Laboratory. This UC Day received overwhelmingly positive feedback. Two thousand members of the UC Advocacy Network (UCAN) community have asked legislators to support UC in this year's State budget. Ms. Fullerton added that SGR met weekly with campus government relations staff.

Alberto Sandoval, Senior Director of Community and Government Relations at UC Irvine, presented the work of his team, which dedicated much time to educating the University's stakeholders about the impact of UC's contributions and how they could partner with UC to ensure the continued success of public higher education. His office shared UC Irvine's achievements through social media and advocated UCI and systemwide priorities with State leaders and their staff through direct engagement and partnerships like UCAN. His office tracked, analyzed, and reported legislative and public policy issues; secured letters from legislators in support of grants or policy objectives; and provided the campus community with voter information and polling places. Staff served on the boards of organizations to fulfill UC's public service mission. Government representatives and local leaders were regularly invited to visit the Irvine campus, during which students could share issues of importance to them and medical professionals and others could share their expertise. Mr. Sandoval highlighted recent visits by government officials. Members of the community were also invited to campus to enjoy the arts, the campus library, Aldrich Park,

UCI athletics, and other resources. UC Irvine was also able to broaden its reach by coordinating advocacy campaigns with Federal Governmental Relations (FGR) and SGR. The most recent UC Day in Sacramento was a resounding success for UCI. The campus discussed its budget and the UCI Medical Center with legislators representing Orange County, and students shared their experiences. In 2017, legislators urged California universities to adopt free speech statements and used Chancellor Gillman's statement as an example. UCI community engagement has included participating in diversity celebrations, volunteering, and publishing "News for Neighbors," a newsletter that shared UCI stories and events with local residents. The campus has provided drought-tolerant plants to residents and shared information about its sustainability practices and research. UC Irvine has participated in advocacy days in Washington, D.C. that were organized by FGR and higher education organizations such as the Alliance of Hispanic-Serving Research Universities. UCI was slated to host its own advocacy day on Capitol Hill next month.

Committee Chair Reilly asked about the total amount of money being requested in bond measures that could be on the March 2024 ballot. Ms. Fullerton replied that she would return to the Regents with this information.

Committee Chair Reilly invited Student Observer Celene Aridin to make remarks.

Ms. Aridin began her remarks by sharing her experience on UC Day. While she was heartened that Governor Newsom's May Revision of the State budget included his multi-year funding Compact with UC, Ms. Aridin noted that it was more difficult to secure funding for initiatives like basic needs. This academic year, there has been a 40 percent increase in the number of students served systemwide, and the need was expected to grow. She asked that UC join students in advocating for an additional \$5 million in ongoing funding for basic needs, as well as \$19 million for disability support services. She urged the University to support SB 525, which she stated would raise the minimum wage for healthcare workers to \$25 per hour, instead of opposing it. Ms. Aridin stated that these workers ensured the smooth operation of UC hospitals and other institutions and were rallying across the state for better pay. She also asked that the Regents support AB 1160, which would prohibit an institution from withholding enrollment from students who withdraw and are unable to repay their financial aid. She stated that the bill could remove barriers and improve student retention and success.

Committee Chair Reilly announced that this was Regent Timmons' last Committee meeting and thanked her for serving as Committee Vice Chair. She noted that this was also the last Committee meeting for Staff Advisor Lakireddy and thanked her for her service.

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Attest:

Secretary and Chief of Staff