

Date of Hearing: April 21, 2026

Fiscal: Yes

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON PRIVACY AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, Chair

AB 2504 (Bauer-Kahan) – As Amended April 16, 2026

SUBJECT: Community colleges: artificial intelligence: pilot program

SYNOPSIS

Generative AI (GenAI) tools are rapidly evolving, threatening to disrupt thousands of workers who may not be prepared to adapt to the shifting workforce landscape. The entertainment industry is particularly susceptible to job disruptions due to GenAI's ability to learn from consuming mass amounts of data to produce realistic images, videos, audio, and text.

To aid in workforce development in the entertainment industry, this bill creates a pilot program to provide training and resources to students at risk of being displaced by GenAI in the entertainment industry, including voice actors, sound engineers, and employees at entry-level positions. This bill requires the California Community Colleges to initiate a pilot program across its districts, in partnership with relevant labor unions, to provide reskilling and upskilling opportunities to prepare students for the evolving future.

This bill is author-sponsored and has support from the William Morris Endeavor, a talent agency representing clients in the entertainment industry. This bill has no registered opposition.

This bill was previously heard in the Higher Education Committee, where it passed on a 9-0-1 vote.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes the California Community Colleges, consisting of community college districts, under the administration of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, as one of the segments of public postsecondary education in this state. (Ed. Code § 70900.)
- 2) Creates for each community college district a board of trustees, known as the governing board, and authorizes the governing board to establish, maintain, operate, and govern each community college within their district in accordance with state and federal law, as specified. Authorizes the governing board to initiate and carry on any program, activity, or otherwise act in any manner that is not in conflict or inconsistent with any law and that is not in conflict with the purpose of a community college district, as specified. (Ed. Code § 70902.)
- 3) Establishes the California Online Community College Act, under the administration of the board of governors, for specified purposes, and requires the college to develop a Research and Development Unit to, among other things, focus on using technology, data science, behavioral science, machine learning, and artificial intelligence to build out student supports. (Ed. Code § 75000 et seq.)
- 4) Defines “artificial intelligence” or “AI” to mean an engineered or machine-based system that varies in its level of autonomy and that can, for explicit or implicit objectives, infer from the

input it receives how to generate outputs that can influence physical or virtual environments. (Gov. Code § 11546.45.5.)

- 5) Defines “GenAI” or “generative artificial intelligence” to mean an artificial intelligence system that can generate derived synthetic content, including text, images, video, and audio that emulates the structure and characteristics of the system’s training data. (Gov. Code. § 11549.64(b).)

THIS BILL:

- 1) Requires the office of the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges (Chancellor’s office), to establish the Future of Creative Industries Pilot Program with the following goals:
 - a. Support California workers in creative and entertainment industries, including film, television, music, touring, and live events, who have been or are at risk of being displaced by GenAI, such as sound engineers, voice actors, concept artists, and employees in entry-level positions, by providing structured reskilling and upskilling opportunities through the California Community Colleges.
 - b. Ensure that each participating community college district program is in meaningful partnership with labor unions representing creative workers and with industry representatives to design and implement curriculum and training models that reflect the real tools, condition, and career pathways of the workforce being served.
 - c. Establish a coordinated, outcomes-driven model that California Community Colleges and workforce systems can replicate across sectors facing artificial intelligence-driven employment disruption.
- 2) Requires the pilot program to be developed in partnership with labor unions representing creative workers and industry representatives.
- 3) Requires the Chancellor’s office to, on or before June 30, 2027, establish eligibility requirements for community colleges seeking to apply to participate in the pilot program.
- 4) Limits entry into the pilot program to ten community college districts statewide, to be selected by the Chancellor’s office. Directs the chancellor’s office to ensure equitable access to the pilot program between the northern, central, and southern regions of the state.
- 5) Requires the implementation of the pilot program to begin on or before July 1, 2027.
- 6) Requires the Chancellor’s office to submit a report to the Legislature, on or before January 1, 2032, evaluating the effectiveness of the pilot program at campuses maintained by community college districts participating in the pilot program.
- 7) Requires the report outlined in 6) to include, at a minimum, the number of participants who completed the pilot program, a comprehensive list of the certificates or degrees awarded to participants who completed the pilot program, and outcomes and job placement rates of participants who completed the pilot program. Requires that the data to be disaggregated by student demographics.

- 8) Requires the report outlined in 6) to include outcomes and legislative recommendations and to be in line with relevant state law, as specified.
- 9) Specifies that the provisions of this bill become operative only upon appropriation by the Legislature in the annual Budget Act or another statute for its purposes.
- 10) Sunsets the provisions on January 1, 2033.

COMMENTS:

1) **Author's statement.** According to the author:

AB 2504 supports and upskills professional staff within the creative and entertainment industries by creating the Future of Creative Industries Pilot Program. The introduction and rapid advancement of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) is fundamentally reshaping California's creative economy and the careers within it. Capable of producing text, images, video, and audio that emulates the expressive works used to train it, GenAI is driving early but significant disruption across these fields. The scale of what is at stake is far from abstract, these concerns were central to the 2023 Hollywood strikes, and a structural shift in production activity continues to deepen the challenge for the region's creative workforce.

A January 2024 survey by CVL Economics projected that 203,800 entertainment jobs would likely be disrupted in the United States by 2026, including 62,000 in California, with sound engineers, voice actors, concept artists, and employees in entry-level positions at the greatest risk of displacement. As AI continues to reshape the landscape, the California Legislature has an opportunity to support the creatives who built their careers in these fields. AB 2504 brings together school leaders, workers, unions, and industry partners to develop upskilling criteria that will be implemented across five community colleges.

2) The rise of GenAI in the workforce. The development of GenAI has created exciting opportunities for California's economy and the lives of its residents. Whereas AI uses algorithms to make predictions and recommendations following training on small, specific datasets, GenAI is trained on massive datasets that allows the tool to generate compelling text, images and audio in an instant. The ability for GenAI to perform tasks typically done by humans has led to concerns about workforce displacement, especially in creative fields where GenAI is becoming more commonplace.

GenAI's use has skyrocketed in recent years, with one report suggesting that roughly 115 million to 180 million people use GenAI daily.¹ In the workforce, approximately 79 percent of companies rely on GenAI tools for at least one business function, up from 33 percent in 2023.² According to the World Economic Forum's annual survey of over 10,000 executives across the world, over half of all executive respondents (54 percent) voiced concerns that AI would

¹ Andres, Guadamuz, "How many people are using generative AI on a daily basis? A Gemini report," (Apr 14, 2025), <https://www.technollama.co.uk/a-gemini-report-how-many-people-are-using-generative-ai-on-a-daily-basis-a-gemini-report>.

² McKinsey, "The state of AI in 2025: Agents, innovation, and transformation," (2025), https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/quantumblack/our-insights/the-state-of-ai#.

displace a large number of jobs.³ While 45 percent of respondents believe AI will increase businesses' profit margins, only 23 percent think that AI will create a large number of new jobs, and an even smaller fraction of respondents (12 percent) believe that AI will increase wages for employees.⁴

As outlined by the Higher Education Committee's analysis of this bill (p. 3), The World Economic Forum posits four scenarios for the future of jobs in 2030:

- 1) *Scenario 1: Supercharged Progress* - AI advances rapidly, transforming industries, boosting productivity, and enabling widespread innovation. Many traditional jobs disappear, but new roles emerge quickly as people manage and collaborate with intelligent systems. However, governance, ethics, and social protections struggle to keep pace with the speed of change.
- 2) *Scenario 2: The Age of Displacement* - AI development outstrips the workforce's ability to adapt, leading to rapid automation and widespread job loss. While productivity rises, social systems lag behind, causing unemployment, declining consumer confidence, and instability. Economies advance technologically but become increasingly fractured and unequal.
- 3) *Scenario 3: Co-Pilot Economy* - AI progresses steadily, with a focus on augmenting human work rather than replacing it. Human-AI collaboration becomes the norm, driving gradual but meaningful transformation across industries. Early investments in skills, infrastructure, and governance allow some economies to adapt and benefit more effectively.
- 4) *Scenario 4: Stalled Progress* - AI advances but is limited by a lack of workforce skills, resulting in uneven productivity gains. Benefits concentrate in regions and firms with expertise, while others fall behind, deepening inequality. Automation displaces routine jobs, demand rises for skilled trades, and overall economic growth remains constrained.⁵

In 2023, just months after ChatGPT was released, the Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA) and the Writer's Guild of America (WGA) both went on strike due largely to concerns that GenAI would co-opt jobs long held by paid actors and writers.⁶ Advocates for the strikes argued that GenAI stole troves of data from these artists, without providing any form of compensation, to train GenAI's models. These very same models were now threatening to displace the artists. Using the work produced by creatives to learn how to generate its own creative content, GenAI allowed film and television industries to cut costs for employee labor without offering any compensation to the workers whose data trained the

³ World Economic Forum. "Four Futures for Jobs in the New Economy: AI and Talent in 2030," (Jan. 7, 2026), <https://www.weforum.org/publications/four-futures-for-jobs-in-the-new-economy-ai-and-talent-in-2030/>.

⁴ *Id.*, p. 5.

⁵ *Id.*, p. 7.

⁶ Matt Scherer, "The SAG-AFTRA Strike is Over, But the AI Fight in Hollywood is Just Beginning," *Center for Democracy & Technology*, (Jan. 4, 2024), <https://cdt.org/insights/the-sag-aftra-strike-is-over-but-the-ai-fight-in-hollywood-is-just-beginning/#:~:text=The%20Screen%20Actors%20Guild%2DAmerican%20Federation%20of%20Television,discuss%20remuneration%20for%20training%20generative%20AI%20systems.>

models. Joseph Gordon-Levitt, a well-known actor and advocate for worker protections against AI, argues:

The U.S. Copyright Office recently issued an official statement that completely AI-generated works are not eligible for registration, saying, “These technologies ‘train’ on vast quantities of preexisting human-authored works and use inferences from that training to generate new content.” I imagine the copyright question will force tech companies to come up with a solution to attribute some sort of human authorship to an AI’s outputs. But here’s the question: Who owns the copyright to the training data? Who will therefore reap the benefits?

The answer to that key question, in the case of the film and television industry, is not the writers, actors, camera operators, costume designers, sound mixers or any of the other people who made the creations. The copyright is owned by the big studios. See the problem?

When I do a movie, and I sign my contract with a movie studio, I agree that the studio will own the copyright to the movie. Which feels fair and non-threatening. The studio paid to make the movie, so it should get to monetize the movie however it wants. But if I had known that by signing this contract and allowing the studio to be the movie’s sole copyright holder, I would then be allowing the studio to use that intellectual property as training data for an AI that would put me out of a job forever, I would never have signed that contract.⁷

Negotiations resulting from the two strikes led to important provisions for protecting writers from GenAI job-displacement and established consent requirements to use digital replicas of performers, defined as capturing a person’s likeness to portray a person performing an action that they did not do.⁸ Contract negotiations are re-opening soon – July 2026 – and the pressures that GenAI is exerting on the creative industry have only heightened as the technology develops.

AI’s impacts on workers is a story still unfolding, with many artists at the forefront due to GenAI’s unique ability to produce realistic images, videos, and text that, historically, could only be made by highly talented artists. A 2024 survey of 300 entertainment executives conducted by DVL Economics reveals that the industry is largely embracing GenAI, with over 90 percent of respondents predicting that GenAI’s use would only grow in coming years.⁹ However, job disruption remains a pressing concern given the tightening belts of nearly every entertainment industry firm. In California alone, 62,000 workers in the entertainment industry at large are predicted to be disrupted by AI by 2026.¹⁰

A 2026 report from the Otis College of Art and Design found that from 2022 to 2025 (the years after ChatGPT was released), the number of jobs in the California entertainment industry shrunk

⁷ Joseph Gordon-Levitt, “If artificial intelligence uses your work, it should pay you,” *The Washington Post*, (July 26, 2023), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2023/07/26/joseph-gordon-levitt-artificial-intelligence-residuals/>.

⁸ Scherer, “The SAG-AFTRA Strike is Over.”; “Know Your Rights: Artificial Intelligence,” *Writers Guild of America West*, (Dec. 18, 2025), <https://www.wga.org/contracts/know-your-rights/artificial-intelligence>.

⁹ CVL Economics, “Future Unscripted: The Impact of Generative Artificial Intelligence on Entertainment Industry Jobs,” (January 2024), https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5ce331b47a39b9000198ffa/t/65b9314fd6198f70b0ec7402/1706635612414/Future+Unscripted+-+The+Impact+of+Generative+Artificial+Intelligence+on+Entertainment+Industry+Jobs+-+pages_compressed.pdf.

¹⁰ *Id.*, p. 7.

by 14 percent (114,000 jobs).¹¹ However, the report states that many of these job losses are not directly tied to AI, but rather the result of budget cuts and cost-driven displacement of lower-paying roles. The report did find, notably, that AI was shifting creative work significantly and increasing the pressure to produce lower quality work for lower costs. The report suggests that employers can address some of the issues with quality by initiating firing freezes, arguing: “workers who know they will not be adopting themselves out of a job will experiment more openly, share insights more freely, and invest genuine effort into making AI tools work.”¹²

3) The need for this bill. This bill tasks the California Community Colleges with developing and implementing a pilot program to provide critical guidance for individuals interested in entering the rapidly evolving entertainment industry. The goal of the pilot program is to assist workers at risk for GenAI job disruption by providing upskilling and reskilling opportunities, in partnership with relevant labor unions. California Community Colleges have already displayed strong commitment to addressing AI’s potential impacts on the workforce, including by launching *Vision 2030*, a roadmap focused on integrating AI and Generative AI to elevate teaching and learning.¹³ As part of *Vision 2030*’s goals, California Community Colleges are partnering with Google to provide more than two million students and faculty with free access to AI training and Google Career Certificates, as well as offering access to GenAI tool’s like Google Gemini for Education.¹⁴ The pilot program created under AB 2504 puts another tool in the California’s Community College’s toolkit to support students and staff navigating the evolving workforce.

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: William Morris Endeavor (WME), a talent agency representing clients spanning film, television, music, sports, and the broader entertainment industry, writes in support:

We are grateful for the state’s continued investment in our industry through the recent expansion of the state’s Film and Television Tax Credit Program and applaud the work of the legislature to create and prioritize that program. To ensure California can fully benefit from this ongoing investment, we urge you to also address the growing impact of artificial intelligence on the entertainment industry.

Given our clients’ reach across the full creative spectrum, we have a unique understanding of how emerging technologies shape the industry, drive growth, and impact the creative workforce. The history of the media business is a history of realignment that goes back to the transition from radio to TV, and silent films to “talkies.” Artificial intelligence is reshaping the U.S. economy at a pace faster than previous technological transitions and, while AI promises productivity, growth, and global competitiveness, it also presents serious workforce disruption risks across all sectors, including the creative arts.

¹¹ Katie Kilkenny, “California’s Creative Job Losses Aren’t AI Casualties, A New Report Finds (Exclusive),” *The Hollywood Reporter*, (Apr. 6, 2026), <https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/business/business-news/california-lost-creative-job-losses-ai-123655589/>.

¹² *Id.*

¹³ “Vision 2030 – The July 2025 Edition,” *California Community Colleges*, (July 2025), <https://www.cccco.edu/-/media/CCCCO-Website/docs/vision2030/vision-2030-report.pdf>.

¹⁴ Melissa Villarin, “California Community Colleges and Google Launch Nation’s Largest Education System Partnership to Equip Millions of Students for the Future Workforce,” *California Community Colleges*, (Sept. 10, 2025), <https://www.cccco.edu/About-Us/News-and-Media/Press-Releases/2025-ai-partnership-with-google>.

California's creative economy is both a defining feature of the state and a vital economic engine. Currently, California's creative economy employs more than 760,000 workers with an average salary of \$191,000 per year, accounting for roughly five percent of the state's workforce. Yet a January 2024 CVL Economics study projected that 62,000 jobs in California could be disruptive by GenAI by 2026. The scale of what is at stake is not abstract; these concerns were a central issue in the 2023 Hollywood strikes and are at the core of the 2026 labor negotiations.

AB 2504 would establish a Future of Creative Industry Pilot Program to upskill and support the very professionals the state's tax credit is designed to sustain, ensuring no one is left behind as the industry evolves. Under AB 2504, the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, in partnership with unions including SAG-AFTRA and industry employers including WME, will establish a new pilot program, informed by and for employers. This program creates tremendous opportunity for public private partnerships that leverage industry expertise and invest in the workers, talent, and creatives who are the lifeblood of one of this state's most iconic industries.

AB 2504 proposes to designate five California community colleges within the northern, central, and southern parts of the state region to serve as implementation hubs, selected for their capacity to equitably reach the creative workforce and deliver industry-connected training at scale. This strategy consolidates workforce development through existing institutions rather than creating new programs, aligning with your efforts to streamline government. Curriculum and program design will be developed collaboratively with industry partners, union representatives, and worker communities. This is intentional: the workforce itself has the most accurate read on what tools matter and what the experience needs to feel like to be effective.

We are confident that enacting AB 2504 would produce the following outcomes:

- Workers and talent served across five participating colleges, with documented completion and placement data by college, demographic group, and entertainment sector.
- Industry-validated skill frameworks co-developed with unions, including SAG-AFTRA and industry including WME that reflect real hiring and production demands, not assumptions about what the industry needs.
- A published replication framework making the model available to any California community college or workforce system seeking to scale AI transition training in other sectors.
- Demonstrated employer engagement, measured by studios, production companies, and agencies that participate in curriculum co-design, hire program graduates, or formally endorse the initiative.
- A policy brief for the Legislature and Governor's Office documenting what worked, what it cost, and what sustained investment would produce at scale.

- As you know, the question is not whether AI will reshape roles in entertainment. It already has. The only question that matters now is: who controls the story? It is for these reasons that I respectfully urge your support for AB 2504.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

William Morris Endeavor (WME) Img, LLC

Opposition

None on file.

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