CHICO — President Paul Zingg of Chico State University will go to Sacramento Tuesday to urge legislators not to make further cuts to the California State University.

Zingg will join CSU Chancellor Charles Reed and a number of other campus presidents for a "budget advocacy day."

As part of its efforts to fill a massive hole in the state budget, the Legislature has already approved cutting the state allocation to the CSU by $500 million.

Gov. Brown said earlier in the year that if three temporary tax increases were not extended, the CSU’s allocation would be cut by $1 billion, as would the allocation for the UC system.

CSU officials held out some hope that Brown might change his mind on hitting higher education with such a heavy ax.

But when the governor issued his revised budget proposal on Monday, it still included the $1 billion cut if the tax increases were not extended. The possibility of those extensions remains uncertain.

"At this point, the CSU and its campuses must plan for the worst," Zingg wrote in an email to the Enterprise-Record on Tuesday.

"A month ago, the governor told the public higher-ed leaders in this state that he thought higher ed had suffered enough," Zingg wrote. "So, despite some reason to be optimistic in such words that no further cuts would be coming our way, we have a May Revise that still proposes an additional $500 million hit to both the UC and the CSU, contingent, of course, on developments that the governor does not control."

Zingg added, "I don't see any real evidence or reason for optimism."

Republicans in the Legislature have come out with their own budget plan, which calls for keeping the cut at $500 million for both the CSU and the UC.

Zingg said that proposal didn't increase his confidence.
"Whether or not that position will hold remains to be seen," he wrote. "We can't just sit around and wait for that to be clarified though. We must plan for the dark consequences of an 'all-cuts' budget as the governor threatens."

Asked what he thought about the Republicans' budget proposal, Mike Uhlenkamp, communications director for the CSU, said, "we're behind whatever's going to hurt the least."

Like Zingg, he wondered if the GOP proposal for higher education would go anywhere.

Uhlenkamp said the $500 million cut that has been approved presents the CSU with a huge challenge. "It's close to 20 percent of last year's funding," he said. "Anything beyond $500 million will start causing a tremendous amount of damage."

As the CSU has started planning for a possible $1 billion cut, he said, it has put on the table turning away 20,000 students and raising tuition by up to 32 percent.