CHICO — Paul Zingg, president of Chico State University, said he saw "nothing good" for higher education or California in Gov. Brown's revised budget proposal, which was released today.

In Brown's January budget proposal, the California State University stood to be cut by $200 million if voters didn't pass the governor's November ballot measure to increase taxes.

Today's revised budget proposal raised that "trigger cut" to $250 million.

"Chico State's total loss of general-fund funding in this latest scenario (would) be about $33 million," Zingg wrote in an email to the Enterprise-Record today.

Zingg added, "We are facing program eliminations and significant negative impacts on our workforce in this scenario. Not to mention threats to supporting student access and progress to degrees."

The president wrote in response to questions.

CSU spokesman Mike Uhlenkamp had a milder reaction to Brown's budget revision than Zingg did.

"We're relieved that the governor did not make any additional direct cuts to higher education in the May Revise and appreciate his efforts there," he wrote in an email.

"However, the added trigger could prove challenging for the CSU. The November election will be critical because if the tax measure is not approved by voters, there could be long-lasting damage to the system based on another $250 million cut."

Uhlenkamp noted that during the current academic year, the state cut its allocation to the CSU by $750 million.
In his message, Zingg cited a report by the nonpartisan state Legislative Analyst's Office, which he said "underscores how short-sighted and wrong this approach is."

In today's budget revision, Zingg wrote, "there is nothing good, whatsoever, for higher education, building social capital, and enabling the economic recovery of our state ... ."

Asked what he meant by "social capital," Zingg responded, "it means a number of things, including social justice, enabling our citizens to have hope for the future, providing opportunity for social mobility, strengthening educational levels for all areas of endeavor, etc."

Staff writer Larry Mitchell can be reached at 896-7759, lmitchell@chicoer.com, or followed on Twitter @LarryMitchell7.