



March 29, 2010

The Honorable Nathan Fletcher
California State Assembly
9909 Mira Mesa Blvd. Ste. 130
San Diego, CA 92131

Dear Assembly Member Fletcher:

As a voter and parent in the Poway Unified School District, I am extremely troubled by the continued trend of disproportionate cuts to education funding in the state budget. Our district has faced reductions in five of the last seven years and shouldered more than \$48 million in cuts. Now the Governor has proposed reducing education funding by another \$2.4 billion. For Poway Unified, this will mean cutting \$24 million in the 2010-11 school year – more than 10% of our districts \$235 million annual budget.

Class offerings, staff, teachers, transportation, and opportunities for students have been systematically eliminated from our schools over time, putting our children's education and future at risk. During your visit to Westview last fall, you saw how crowded our high school classes are now – next year they will increase by an average of seven students, our kindergarten classes will be 50% larger than last year, and all other grade levels will be increased to the maximum allowed by education code.

You state on your website that ***“One of the most important responsibilities of any state government is to provide a quality public education system for its citizens.”*** In order for our district to continue their ability to educate and prepare our students, we are asking you to join us in finding a solution to the budget crisis that does not further erode necessary funding for public education.

Numerous reports including “Measuring Up 2008” by the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, and “Educating California: Choices for the Future” by the Public Policy Institute, warn that California's continued lack of support for its public schools is jeopardizing our state's future economy and the prosperity of its residents.

Investing in children benefits all California taxpayers. “The Race between Education and Technology,” out of Harvard University and the National Bureau of Economic Research, ties economic prosperity directly to educational opportunities. A 2009 RAND Institute report, “The Benefits to Taxpayers from Increases in Students' Educational Attainment” explains how investments in education benefit taxpayers in the form of increases in tax revenues and decreases in public spending on social support programs and prisons.

As you state on your website: ***“California's prosperity, as with our children's livelihoods and success in life, will be a direct reflection of our ability to educate and prepare our students for the future.”*** My children and the millions of other children in California's public education system do not have the luxury of waiting. Unlike roads and bridges, we can't go back and fix them when the economy improves.

Please stand up for the children in your district and protect them from further cuts to their schools.

Sincerely,

Please sign above and print your name here

Street Address

City, State, Zip