

February 3, 2010

The Honorable Tom Harman
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 3070
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Harman,

As a voter and parent in Capistrano Unified School District, I am deeply concerned about the effect of the Governor's proposed January budget on public education. This proposal makes huge cuts to schools, in the amount of \$2.4 billion over the next two years, despite the Governor's pledge to protect education.

In the past two years, \$17 billion has been cut from school budgets, cuts that are disproportionate to those made in other program areas of the state budget. Additional cuts to social services have added to the budget burden borne by our state's children and families. ***It is imperative that additional cuts not be imposed on schools or children's programs in this year's budget.***

Please keep the following points in mind:

- Any additional cuts to education and children's health and social service programs will only dig our state deeper into the hole we need to climb out of, and delay our economic recovery.
- Investing in education now is investing effectively for the future. A 2009 RAND Institute report concluded that investments in education benefit taxpayers, because such funding leads to increased income tax revenues and decreased costs for social support services and prisons.
- Californians understand the connection between investment and performance. According to a statewide survey conducted in April 2009 by the Public Policy Institute of California, 61 percent of Californians believe that more state education funding would lead to higher quality public schools.
- New cuts to schools would contradict educational policy reforms being advanced by our legislators as part of the state's application for federal Race To The Top funds. We really can't race to the top in education if we sink to the bottom in our investment in children.

We all know that this year's budget will require tough choices. But it also gives you, as our elected representative, the opportunity to do something brave and rare – put the next generation above the next election by fully protecting funding for education and children.

Sincerely,

Name _____

Address _____

