



August 18, 2015

The Honorable Kevin de León  
Senate President pro Tempore  
State Capitol, Room 205  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator de León,

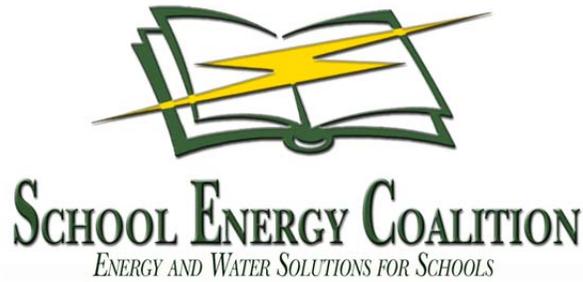
On behalf of the School Energy Coalition an organization made up of K-12 schools, community colleges, school construction and energy consultants focused on energy and water efficiency and renewable generation projects for California's students, I am writing to you regarding the August 17, 2015 article by Julia Horowitz of the Associated Press (AP) regarding the Proposition 39 program entitled "California Measure Fails to Create Green Jobs."

The article raises a number of issues regarding oversight and savings that do not reflect a good understanding of the current status of the program. The article appears to blame the Proposition 39 program implementation for the lack of data at this time due to regulations and control designed to protect the expenditure of taxpayer funds under Proposition 39. We understand the need to ensure Proposition 39 funds are being spent on projects that meet the voters' intent.

SEC knows there are hundreds of great school district projects statewide that are moving forward under this program. The revenue allocated to K-14 schools through Proposition 39 is successfully providing funding for energy efficiency projects will ultimately pay back schools and taxpayers in real dollar savings over time and lower our use of energy – which is a wise environmental choice for our community and our state.

With regard to oversight at the state level, we also know that most projects are still in the execution or pre-execution stage. There are many schools statewide that are collecting energy and dollar savings data to present to the state as required under Proposition 39 when these projects are fully executed.

The article fails to recognize that there is much data and analysis that must be done before installation or construction so that the projects deliver the savings promised, and you just cannot rush that. Communities around schools are very involved, excited and grateful for this opportunity, along with employees and others that are assisting to support these projects so that they deliver the efficiencies that we have promised our teachers students, community and state.



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As of August 10, 2015, the California Energy Commission (CEC) reports that 942 school districts and over 1,000 charter schools have moved forward with energy efficiency projects funded with revenue provided by Proposition 39 that are projected to provide over \$25,146,844 *annually* in utility bill savings. That is money that schools can use for other district priorities such as science, art, or career tech labs, equipment, teachers, and facility upkeep.

With regard to the article's charge that the state's Citizens Oversight Board (Board) has not yet met, pursuant to the State's Education Audit Appeals Panel, school projects have between 12 and 15 months to submit a report of its project expenditures to the Board and they will begin to receive reports annually on October 1, 2015. Does the AP want the Board to meet with no agenda and no project reports to review or discuss? That does not seem to be a good use of taxpayer dollars.

SEC would like to thank you, Senator De Leon, for your leadership in focusing specifically on school energy efficiency projects. These allocated funds will ultimately result in savings that help schools at a time when there is very little money available for school repair and facility projects.

Be assured that California schools are moving forward in a way that complies with the program. We know that the return on investment required by the state will provide ongoing savings for schools and taxpayers, representing a wise investment of these funds, and will result in lower greenhouse gas emissions in communities statewide.

Sincerely,

Anna Ferrera  
Executive Director

cc:

Kip Lipper, Office of Senate pro Tempore Kevin de León  
Dana Williamson, Office of Governor Jerry Brown  
Arnie Sowell, Office of Speaker Toni Atkins  
Andrew McAllister, California Energy Commission  
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