

The Honorable Tom McClintock
Senator
State Capitol, Room 3070
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator McClintock:

As a parent with children in public school, I am upset to learn about the proposal to cut funding to our schools. Once again, California schools are facing enormous budget reductions by the state. Of the state's proposed budget cuts, 62% of the real cuts are in education, and this after 15 years straight of cuts to education. California is already a dismal 46th in the nation in funding schools. We spend a disgraceful \$2,000 less per student than the national average.

The governor's proposed \$4.8 billion budget cut would decimate the voter-approved minimum-funding guarantee for schools. The fact is Proposition 98 exists to protect funding for students' education.

This proposal translates to nearly \$2 million in cuts next year in our small school district of Oak Park Unified. Our 3,700 students face the loss of 40 out of 200 teachers. There will be a significant class size increase in a state where classroom sizes are already among the largest in the nation. Thirty sections, or classes, in our high school would be lost. We would lose counselors even though California already has the worst student-to-counselor ratio in the nation.

We are doing our part for our children. Our local community funds a parcel tax for teacher salaries and a bond for technology. Our parent-teacher organizations raise significant funds and our Friends of Oak Park Schools organization raises funds for teacher salaries. However, we cannot do it alone. We *must* have the state's support to make our children a priority. Do not undermine their education and future with such radical budget cuts. **Do not leave our children behind.**

Respectfully,