

August 17, 2012

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator for California

The Honorable Barbara Boxer  
United States Senator for California

The Honorable John A. Pérez  
Speaker of the Assembly of California

The Honorable Darrell Steinberg  
Senate President pro Tempore of California

Dear Senators Feinstein and Boxer, Senate President pro Tempore Steinberg and Speaker Pérez,

Thank you for reaching out to me yesterday afternoon regarding the critical November statewide ballot measures.

I am heartened to read the comment at the end of your letter that we should “allow each initiative to stand on its own merits.” PTA has been advocating for this approach all along – even early on when some urged us to drop our support for Proposition 38 before it had a chance to qualify for the ballot and more people could learn about it.

We all agree our state needs to invest more in our public schools. As you know, adequate school funding is a top priority for California State PTA and our nearly 900,000 members. The traumatic economic events of the past five years have resulted in unacceptable cuts to public education in the amount of \$20 billion. We cannot wait any longer to reverse this.

Proposition 38 identifies increasing education funding as the top priority and provides guaranteed additional revenues to every local public school to start to restore the programs and services our children need and deserve.

We deeply respect the Governor and his commitment to addressing California’s challenges. While we support a different measure this November, we understand that both of us have the best interests of California at heart. Similarly, we think voters understand that in a state as large as California, there is room for more than one idea about how best to fund our schools and help revive our economy.

Because of the significance of the decision voters face, they deserve straightforward and clear information about each of the initiatives without the distraction of negative campaigning.

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While California State PTA strongly supports Proposition 38 because we feel it is the best course for children and our state, our association has *not* taken a position in opposition to Proposition 30. To the best of my knowledge, the many education, civil rights, business, service and other organizations that have joined our growing coalition have also not taken an opposed position to Proposition 30.

In contrast, some supporters of Proposition 30 are formally and actively opposed to Proposition 38. Some even formed a political committee and also submitted ballot arguments against Proposition 38 and testified publicly against Proposition 38.

Perhaps a good first step in creating a positive environment is to urge supporters on both sides to agree not to formally and actively *oppose* each other's initiatives.

I can assure you that California State PTA will continue to advocate on behalf of all children in a manner that is mutually respectful and aimed at educating voters in a constructive, fact-based manner about the vital policy issues and solutions presented by the initiatives.

We ask all who are involved in these campaigns to make the same commitment.

Senators and Mr. Speaker, once again I truly appreciate your reaching out to the PTA. We have always worked closely with you and your offices, and we greatly value the work you do on behalf of all Californians.

We are always willing to engage in dialogue with you as well as with the Governor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carol Kocivar". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carol Kocivar  
President