

February 28, 2008

Senate President Pro Tempore Don Perata
Capitol Building #205
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Perata:

As a parent of a child in _____ grade, I was both outraged and saddened to learn about the Governor's proposal to cut funding to our schools. Year after year, we are being forced to fight to ensure our children receive the quality education they need and deserve.

Whenever the state faces a budget shortage, it seems politicians immediately attack our children and our schools to solve the problem. That is just not fair. Our kids had nothing to do with creating the current budget problems and funding for their education is supposed to be protected.

The Governor's proposed \$4.8 billion budget cut will severely damage the quality of education in our state. The proposal would decimate the voter-approved minimum funding guarantee for schools (Proposition 98). That is incredibly short-sighted and simply unacceptable.

These budget reductions would be disastrous to public schools. A \$4.8 billion cut to schools would mean laying off tens of thousands of teachers, statewide increases in class size and the further erosion of the support staff provided to our students. This would threaten the progress that our kids are beginning to make.

At a time when we are starting to see progress in student learning throughout California, this budget represents a giant step backward. Reading scores are up 25 per cent and math scores have increased 17 per cent in the last four years. This progress cannot continue with these proposed cuts to our public schools.

As a parent, I understand the challenges inherent in balancing a budget, but I strongly oppose Governor Schwarzenegger's 2008-09 budget proposal and plans to eviscerate funding for students and schools. Our kids and our schools did not create this budget problem, and their education and future progress should not be undermined because of it. My child, my student, deserves better than this.

Sincerely,