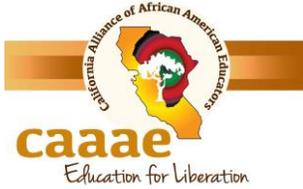


March 29, 2017



The Honorable Mike McGuire
Chair, Senate Governance and Finance
State Capitol, Room 408
Sacramento, California 95814



RE: SB 807 (Stern) as introduced – SUPPORT

Dear Chairman McGuire:

Across California, school districts face an unprecedented teacher shortage as three-quarters of all California school districts report difficulties in recruiting teachers. If we do not act now, the consequences could be disastrous for our children. That's why we support SB 807, the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Act of 2017, also known as the "Invest in Teachers" Act.



The "Invest in Teachers" Act elevates the teaching profession to reflect its importance in our society. Without great teachers, we wouldn't have great doctors, engineers or musicians.



As advocates for California's students and schools, we recognize how difficult it can be for school districts to recruit good educators, especially in the schools and communities that need them most. Over 30 percent of teachers in California leave the profession in the first five years, and the impending retirement of the Baby Boomer generation of teachers will make the challenge even worse.



We have an important responsibility to our children and our communities to ensure that every child is ready for the future. Research shows that pupils with effective teachers are more likely to attend college, earn higher salaries and positively contribute to the California economy. But there are many financial roadblocks that discourage the next generation from becoming and remaining teachers. California is a notoriously expensive place to live and teacher training required to stay in the classroom can cost thousands of dollars.



That's why we support SB 807, which eliminates the state income tax for all public school teachers who teach for more than five years, and provides a tax credit during their first five years of teaching to help teachers afford training required to become fully credentialed.



SB 807 is a structural approach to addressing our teacher shortage by making it less cost-prohibitive to become a teacher, and incentivizing effective teachers to remain in and return to the classroom. California will need tens of thousands new teachers in the next 10 years, and the "Invest in Teachers" Act can help us get there.



We support SB 807 to help ensure that every child in California is taught by a great teacher.

Sincerely,

Jeff Rice
Director
APLUS+

Debra Watkins
Executive Director
California Alliance of African American Educators (CAAAE)

Dwight Bonds
Executive Director
California Association of African American Superintendents and Administrators (CAAASA)

Ryan J. Smith
Executive Director
The Education Trust-West

Ama Nyamekye
Executive Director
E4E-Los Angeles

Bill Lucia
President & CEO
EdVoice

Geoffrey Winder
Co-Executive Director
Genders & Sexualities Alliance Network

Dr. Cristina De Jesus
President & CEO
Green Dot Public Schools California

Ninive Calegari
Founder
The Teacher Salary Project