



California
School
Employees
Association

Allan D. Clark
Association President

Josie Mooney
Executive Director

Governmental Relations
1127 11th St., Suite 346
Sacramento, CA 95814

(916) 444-0598
(800) 867-2026
FAX (916) 444-8539
www.csea.com

Barbara V. Z. Howard
Director

Dave Low
Assistant Director

Jai Sookprasert
Legislative Advocate

Dolores Duran-Flores
Legislative Advocate

Steve Henderson
Legislative Advocate

Joshua Golka
Legislative Advocate

Member of the AFL-CIO

The nation's largest
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April 6, 2010

The Honorable George Runner
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 5097
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 1227 (Runner) -- OPPOSE

Dear Senator Runner:

The California School Employees Association (CSEA), AFL-CIO, has taken an OPPOSE position to your bill, SB 1227, which would call for the elimination of the Division of State Architect (DSA) by transferring school construction plan review and oversight from DSA to local building departments.

For 75 years, the Field Act has successfully ensured the safety of our students and educators during earthquakes by requiring seismic safety architectural plan reviews and independent construction inspection and oversight. Due to its effectiveness, a February 2007 report prepared by the Seismic Safety Commission, "The Field Act and Public School Construction: A 2007 Perspective", concluded that "California schools K-12 and community colleges should be subject to the Field Act. No public school should be exempt from it, nor should any public school be exempted by the Legislature." The report added that "not one public school building constructed under the Field Act has collapsed nor has anyone died in earthquakes. This exemplary performance is directly attributable to the stringent seismic design, thorough plan review, and strict inspection provisioned by the Field Act."

Given this success, a proposal to eliminate the Field Act and the inspection and oversight by the DSA could reduce the safety for students and educators. Local building departments may not have the same level of experience and expertise to ensure the construction of safe schools in our state.

For these reasons, we must oppose SB 1227. If you or your staff have any questions, please feel free to call me at (916) 329-3623.

Sincerely,

Jai Sookprasert
Legislative Advocate

cc: Barbara Howard, Director of Governmental Relations

JS:kg