**Sample COE Letter – County-wide Impacts of Insufficient School Bond Sales**

The Honorable NAME [Your Legislative Representatives]
California State Senate/Assembly
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Request to Increase School Bond Sale Amounts in FY 2018-19 Budget

Dear NAME:

On behalf of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County Office of Education, I am writing to ask for your support to increase the amount of voter-approved Proposition 51 state school bonds to be sold in FY 2018-19. The Governor’s budget proposal includes $640 million in FY 2018-19. This amount is woefully inadequate to meet the need of schools and county offices of education, which have already submitted School Facility Program project applications worth over $3.2 billion to the Office of Public School Construction.

When voters approved Proposition 51 in November 2016, it had been ten years since the last state school bond was authorized. Bond authority for constructing and renovating school facilities had been exhausted since 2012. Since that time, the demand for state support for school facilities has increased as districts address aging buildings and enrollment growth, while striving to create learning environments that provide a 21st Century education.

Because of the significant school facilities needs across our state and within our county, we are asking the Legislature to:

* Sell an additional $2.36 billion in K-12 school bonds, in addition to the proposed $640 million, for a total of $3 billion in FY 2018-19.
* Include budget language to require at least $3.0 billion in projects be processed for State Allocation Board (SAB) apportionment in FY 2018-19.

Districts in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County have submitted School Facility Program project applications to the state worth over $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ [insert dollar amount from county data set]. The Governor’s proposed budget would fund only approximately $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of these projects. Attached, please find data showing the projects in our county that may be funded by the Governor’s $640 million bond sale proposal, in contrast to the projects that may be funded by a $3 billion bond sale. At the current rate, it may be five years before some of these projects receive funding.

These projects would have a real and meaningful impact on our schools and local communities. When voters approved Proposition 51, they expressed their desire to prioritize the construction and renovation of California’s schools. Schools in our county will use state funds to leverage local dollars, maximizing taxpayer and community investments. Some districts do not have the local resources to complete needed projects on their own and depend upon the state to ensure safe, educationally appropriate facilities for their students. The School Facility Program is especially important to county offices of education, because they do not have the authority to issues local bonds and lack access to capital resources. County offices of education directly serve a diverse population of students on a regional basis, including those in special education, alternative education, and court school programs.

[*You may choose to add information about a specific project that would have a significant impact on a local district and community, or information about the challenges that a particular district is facing.]*

Every day, increasing interest rates and construction costs reduce the state’s buying power; the longer the delay, the fewer facilities we will be able to deliver to our communities using Proposition 51 funds and local match dollars. A delay in allocating Proposition 51 funds is not consistent with the will of voters, who understand the critical need to repair and build schools in their own communities.

We urge you to consider the impact a delay in administering Proposition 51 funds will have on our school districts and local communities. On behalf of the students, teachers, and community members in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County, we thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

NAME

*Please provide a copy of your letter to Jessica Contreras (**jcontreras@m-w-h.com**) at the County School Facilities Consortium.*