

*LAKEPORT UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT*

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SB 523

June 18, 2015

Lakeport is a small, rural town located on the west shore of Clear Lake in Lake County, approximately 100 miles northeast of San Francisco. The population of incorporated Lakeport is approximately 5,100. Our community is primarily made up of families with school-age children and retired senior citizens. The Lakeport Unified School District is comprised of Lakeport Elementary School (grades K-3), Terrace Middle School (grades 4-8), Clear Lake High School (grades 9-12), Natural High Continuation School, and Lakeport Unified Home School. We have approximately 1,555 students that attend our schools and we are only able to provide transportation services to approximately 415 students.

Many students who relied on transportation services are now burdened with a long walks on rural roads, of which many have no sidewalks and speed limits of 40 MPH. Many of the families do not have cars or the parents work in agriculture and are unable to bring them into school as they leave for work by 5:30 A.M. which leaves children unattended and on their own to get themselves to school and back home at the end of the day, rain or shine. The increased congestion on feeder streets and in the schools parking lots at peak time is unbearable and dangerous for pedestrians. What ever happened to mass transit? One yellow bus transporting 70 plus students vs 70 cars transporting 70 students, this is a not hard to determine which is best is the best choice. Other positive factors are that students are safer because of cleaner air and less traffic congestion because for every bus we put on the road approximately 50 cars are parked which will reduce traffic congestion, emissions and greenhouse gases.

The passage of SB 523 will reduce the emission so school children are not exposure to both cancer-causing and smog-forming pollution. SB 523 grant funding will replace ageing school buses with new ones that are equipped with the latest diesel technology and pollution control systems that safer for school student to ride on.

It is imperative that SB 523 passes so we can have new busses with the latest passenger restraint systems and reduced exposure of pollutants for young children. We want to keep children healthy, safe and successful.

Stop depriving the most socioeconomic disadvantaged children in our state of access to education! You must support transportation funding so we can get these children to school safely.

Sincerely,

David Norris