



CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION

OF

SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION OFFICIALS

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Michael Rea  
10-11-3

December 14, 2010

Mary D. Nichols, Chair  
California Air Resources Board  
1001 "I" Street  
Sacramento, Ca 95812

**RE: Agenda Item 10-11-3 School Bus Regulations**

Dear Chairperson Nichols,

CASTO opposes the proposed amendments to the school bus regulations. We respectfully request that these regulations are suspended until adequate resources to fund them are attained. California's funding for school transportation prior to the recent economic downturn only covered 45% of our costs, and in the past two years our funding has been cut an additional 20%. School districts throughout California are reducing school transportation, and in some cases completely eliminating this service.

Your mandates would have the unintended consequence of decreasing safety and increasing congestion and thereby increasing air pollution. Parents and children from affluent areas will be able to drive their children to school. It will be the less affluent that will be hurt the most. School transportation is 172 times safer than riding in the family automobile. It will harm our most disadvantaged children because they will have to walk longer distances to school or simply not go.

We are in agreement with you that we need to update our school bus fleet with new modern buses. Our parents want their children to ride in school buses that have seat belts. However, this is the worst time to impose new mandates on school districts without additional funds.

We were very appreciative of the Proposition 1B funds, but those funds are no longer available to us. We would urge you to wait. We know of no other state program that has been cut as much as education. We cannot afford to take additional funds out of the classroom or to eliminate or reduce school transportation any more. Please work with us to get additional funds for school transportation. We sincerely appreciate our on-going relationship to enhance air quality in and around our school buses.

Sincerely,

Michael G. Rea  
Governmental Relations Chairperson  
707-206-9988 x11