

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Office of Legislative and Governmental Affairs

David L. Brewer III
Superintendent of Schools



Santiago Jackson
Interim Director

March 26, 2008

Mary D. Nichols, Chair
California Air Resources Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Regarding: March 27 Air Resources Board Meeting
Agenda Item 08-3-4 School Bus Guidelines

Dear Ms. Nichols:

This letter addresses the Air Resources Board staff's proposed guidelines on the \$200 million contained in Proposition 1B for school bus replacement and for the purchase of traps.

The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) recommends the following:

- Eliminate the proposed \$25,000 school district match
- Eliminate the \$140,000 cap on bus purchase price
- Dedicate 90% of the dollars to new bus purchases

Among all the urban school districts in the state, the LAUSD has the oldest fleet of school buses, with an average bus age of 20.4 years. This means that the LAUSD fleet is three times the national average age of 6.7 years among urban districts (Source: Council of the Great City Schools, "Managing for Results in America's Great City Schools"). The LAUSD has been anticipating the Proposition 1B funds as a positive opportunity to upgrade and improve our fleet.

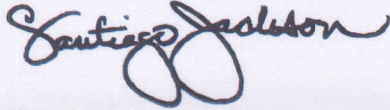
We propose that school districts should not be required to pay the proposed \$25,000 match for each school bus purchased. The school transportation program is one of the most under funded programs in the state budget.

We also believe that ARB should place no cap on the cost of a bus purchase. A cap will essentially require school districts to increase their match from \$25,000 per bus to possibly as high as \$45,000. In the South Coast Air Quality District the only option is to purchase CNG school buses. The cost of a CNG bus will likely be at least \$180,000. The proposed rules require the District to keep our older buses on the road.

Finally, the majority of our older busses that can accommodate traps have already been fitted with traps. Therefore, the LAUSD does not need funding for additional traps. Our need is for the replacement of existing buses. We would urge the ARB to recommend that air quality districts spend at least 90% of the Proposition 1B funds for the replacement of school buses.

Your serious consideration of the needs of the students in our state's largest urban school district is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Santiago Jackson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "S" and "J".

Santiago Jackson
Director
Legislative & Governmental Affairs

c: Members, LAUSD Delegation

ORIGINAL: Board Clerk
Copies: Executive Officer
Chair