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November 13, 2013

The Honorable Jay Rockefeller
United States Senate
531 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senator Rockefeller:

Thank you for authoring and introducing S. 1523 that will continue, and make more flexible, the school facility tax credit bond authority. The Californians for School Facilities (CSF) organization supports your legislation. CSF includes school districts, County Offices of Education, school organizations, contractors, architects, financial firms and other members. All of the CSF membership is focused on providing students and teachers with school facilities that are needed to meet international competition and provide quality jobs for our graduates.

S. 1523 would permanently authorize \$11 billion per year for the Qualified School Construction Bond (QSCB) program and \$1.4 billion per year for the Qualified Zone Academy Bond (QZAB) program. The legislation would allow both tax credits and interest payments to assist school districts with meeting their school facility challenges. In California alone, the most recent estimate of school facility new construction, current facility upgrades and maintenance needs is more than \$170 billion during the next 10 years.

While CSF believes school facilities are primarily a state and local responsibility, we also believe there should be federal assistance because improving school facilities meets national policy objectives. Many of these bonds will be used for increased energy efficiency that will meet the national policy to reduce reliance on imported oil. Reducing oil imports meets national security needs, as well as improving the international balance of trade. New school construction and upgrading current facilities also creates good paying jobs. More than 13,000 jobs are created for each \$1 billion spent on school construction projects. Creating jobs addresses the national policy goal for reducing unemployment and reducing social safety net costs.

For the reasons presented above, CSF supports S. 1523. Please let us know how we can best assist in enacting this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Eric Bakke, CSF Chair
Los Angeles Unified School District

David L. Walrath, CSF Coordinator
Murdoch, Walrath & Holmes