



State of California

LITTLE HOOVER COMMISSION

April 5, 2011

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Stuart Drown
Executive Director

The Honorable Joan Buchanan
Member, California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 2148
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SUPPORT FOR ASSEMBLY BILL 732

Dear Assemblymember Buchanan:


The Little Hoover Commission supports AB 732, the measure you have authored to add a simple and easy to understand graph, chart or report card, prepared by the Legislative Analyst, to the ballot pamphlet for each statewide election with a bond measure. The graph or report card would relate the bond measure to state bond indebtedness.

The Commission supports this measure based on findings and recommendations in its report, *Bond Spending: Expanding and Enhancing Oversight* (June 2009). In this report, the Commission described the important role California voters play in overseeing bond spending by carefully reviewing bond measures proposed on the ballot and approving only those measures that will pay for infrastructure investments that are their highest priority. The Commission found, however, that bonds proposed on the ballot are not only lengthy and complicated, they also are not presented within the context of the state's overarching needs for infrastructure investment or the state's overall budget. Advertisements promoting bond measure further obscure the picture by telling voters that the investment can be made without new taxes. In enacting bond measures with no source of new revenue, however, voters are prioritizing funding for the programs identified in the bond measure above almost all other state spending.

To improve transparency and clarity for voters, the Commission recommended the state establish fundamental criteria for ballot measures and these criteria should be evaluated and included as a simple and easy-to-understand report card in the voter guide for all bond measures placed on the ballot.

As the bill moves through the committee process, I will be writing letters on behalf of the Commission to legislators urging aye votes. If you feel my presence and testimony at a hearing would be helpful, please let me know, and I will make every attempt to be available.

Sincerely,


Stuart Drown
Executive Director

c: Commissioners, Little Hoover Commission