



Targeting Waste • Promoting Efficiency

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April 9, 2007

Priscilla Schreiber
Governing Board President
Grossmont Union High School District
1100 Murray Drive
El Cajon, CA 92020

Dear President Schreiber,

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me, Harvey Goodfriend and Professor Walter Heiser last week, together with Vice President Larry Urdahl. As I mentioned then, I requested the meeting in response to concerns over the execution of Proposition H and the apparent ineffectiveness of the Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee (CBOC). Over the last several months, a number of concerned and frustrated taxpayers in your District have taken the time to call and email our office requesting our organization's assistance.

You may recall that in 2005, our Association communicated our concerns regarding the CBOC to the Governing Board and Superintendent. Since then, the District has made limited progress and we believe there is still significant room for improvement.

The Board's recent decision to add four (4) new members to the CBOC and solicit RFQs for an independent performance audit of Proposition H dating back to the start of the program is promising, and we strongly recommend moving forward with the audit. However, there is still much work to be done and we are calling on the Board to take further action.

It appears the CBOC is still not considering sufficiently comprehensive information to make informed assessments. It is unclear whether the information is either not furnished or not desired by the committee. While they apparently review expenditures of Proposition H funds, it is not in a context where they can readily ascertain whether projects are over budget. Frankly, we do not believe they actually know the current status of the program they are ostensibly overseeing. We do know that there remains significant ambiguity about setting and adjusting program priorities. It is essential that the CBOC play a meaningful role in evaluating any significant changes in the project list presented to voters at the election.

The CBOC web site has not been kept current and remains, after numerous complaints, insufficient. The last audit of Proposition H is dated June 2005. There is far too little detail concerning actual progress of the projects listed. There is no information concerning allocation of funds or schedule of completion. The legal requirement to maintain a current web site is to allow citizens to be informed. The GUHSD CBOC web site fails in that regard. Superintendent Ryan has been urged to refer to the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District CBOC web site on numerous occasions.

SDCTA endorsed Proposition H with the understanding that the itemized needs would be addressed in an efficient and effective manner. The launch of the program was disconcerting. The performance audit will provide you with the opportunity to make corrections and improvements in processes essential to a successful outcome. We urge the Board to restore public confidence and insure the oversight committee conducts itself in a manner that assures the voter that promises made are kept. To this end, we would encourage the Board to consider appointing members of the Bond Advisory Commission (BAC) to the CBOC. The BAC has within a short time, demonstrated its ability to perform the type and level of analysis which should be conducted by the CBOC on a regular basis.

It has been brought to our attention that the District may be considering voter approval of a "clean-up" bond in the near future. It would be a fatal mistake, in our view, to seek voter approval of another bond considering the unaddressed problems related to Proposition H. Our Association would be unlikely to consider endorsement of any future bond without substantial reform to current processes and demonstrated evidence of substantial completion of Proposition H projects.

As I mentioned last week, we would welcome the opportunity to present Best Practices for Oversight Committees to both the Governing Board and CBOC. The best practices we have identified are a result of SDCTA's ten years experience with oversight and the aggregation of observed best practices from nearly 20 oversight committees in this region.

We are interested in working with the Governing Board to improve the Proposition H program and oversight processes. Please do not hesitate to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,



Lani Lutar
President and CEO

cc: GUHSD Governing Board
Superintendent Terry Ryan
Bill Wells, CBOC Chair
Professor Walter Heiser, CBOC member (SDCTA representative)
SDCTA Executive Committee