



July 29, 2020

The Honorable Ben Hueso, Chair  
Senate Committee on Energy, Utilities & Communications  
State Capitol, Room 4035  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**SUBJECT: AB 841 (Ting) Healthy, Efficient Schools and Electric Vehicle Infrastructure – SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Hueso and Committee Members:

On behalf of our organizations, we are writing to support AB 841 by Assembly Member Ting. This bill creates a program to make the air safer to breathe and the water safer to drink in public schools, while reducing energy bills. It also accelerates the installation of infrastructure for zero-emission vehicles needed to combat the largest source of dangerous local air pollution that exacerbates the COVID-19 pandemic.

AB 841 redirects funds authorized but unspent by the CPUC to upgrade heating, cooling, and ventilation systems in public schools, prioritizing schools in underserved communities. It also provides funds to replace aging and inefficient water fixtures and appliances in schools, saving water and energy while reducing exposure to lead. Redirecting efficiency funds for a period of three years to employ workers to make schools safer and more energy efficient is a timely investment.

To combat the air pollution that makes communities more vulnerable to COVID-19 and meet the state's climate goals, California must quickly transition its transportation sector to zero-emission vehicles. AB 841 would deploy charging infrastructure for all types of electric vehicles (EVs) – light, medium, and heavy-duty, fostering an active partnership between the electric industry, labor, and independent firms to meet the state's air quality and climate goals.

Installing electrical equipment needed to charge electric cars, trucks and buses not only keeps workers on the job at a time when unemployment is soaring, it accelerates transportation electrification that puts downward pressure on electric rates and bills to the benefit of all utility customers. According to Synapse Energy Economics, EV drivers in Southern California Edison and Pacific Gas & Electric territory have already contributed more than [\\$800 million](#) in excess of associated costs, money that is automatically returned to all customers in the form of lower rates. At a moment when many Californians are struggling, the state should expand access to EV charging that puts downward pressure on utility bills.

As AB 841 moves forward, we recommend additional amendments as follows:

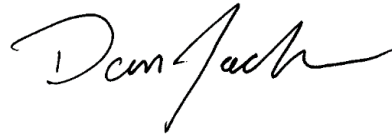
1. Underserved schools prioritized by the bill may need technical assistance to access the School Energy Efficiency Stimulus Program. Technical assistance staff could be housed within the Energy Commission or State Department of Education and should conduct outreach to underserved schools, as defined, and assist with program applications to ensure schools in communities most in need receive the intended upgrades. Costs for the technical assistance staff should be recovered from the unused authorized utility budgets. Representatives of underserved communities and schools must be engaged to determine how to make this program work.
2. Ensure the School Energy Efficiency Stimulus Program does not increase the rates of CARE and FERA customers. While we expect the PUC to continue its longstanding practice to allocate the costs of efficiency programs to the relevant customer class, additional language may be needed to ensure costs are only recovered from non-CARE and non-FERA customers.

AB 841 would increase employment, reduce deadly air pollution, and help improve the health, safety and efficiency of school buildings, all without exacerbating California's budgetary challenges. We request your "AYE" vote on AB 841 when it is heard in committee. Thank you for considering our views.

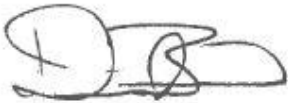
Respectfully submitted,



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cc: Assembly Member Ting