

SONOMA COUNTY JUNIOR COLLEGE DISTRICT

Resolution in Support of Proposition 15, The California Schools and Local Communities Funding Act of 2020

(also known as The California Tax on Commercial Industrial Properties for Education and Local Government Funding Initiative 2020)

Resolution Number 23-20

WHEREAS, for four decades, since the passage of Proposition 13 in 1978, school and community college districts in California have experienced underinvestment and devastating cuts causing California's school funding to fall behind and resulting in fewer services and resources for students and faculty;

WHEREAS, while the intent of Proposition 13 is to help homeowners, a loophole in the system permits major commercial and industrial properties to avoid regular reassessment, resulting in an inequitable tax system;

WHEREAS, the California Schools and Local Communities Funding Act does not affect property taxes for homeowners or renters because the initiative exempts all residential property;

WHEREAS, loopholes in California's property tax system allows a fraction of major commercial and industrial properties to avoid regular reassessment and use schemes to hide change in ownership, providing a windfall at the expense of vital school funding;

WHEREAS, the share of the property tax burden has shifted away from commercial property and toward residential property throughout the state;

WHEREAS, California schools are falling behind and state funded per-student support has declined from the top 10 in the nation to the bottom quarter;

WHEREAS, school funding in California is less than the national average, while California's cost of living is among the highest in the nation;

WHEREAS, public schools in California face challenges in providing an equitable and fair education for a student population with vast differences in language, income, parental education level, and other social, educational, and economic factors;

WHEREAS, research has proven that investments in students raises achievement levels, lowers poverty, and increases the productivity of the workforce;

WHEREAS, estimates by academic researchers at the University of Southern California (USC) estimate that the California Schools and Local Communities Funding Act reclaims \$12 billion in property tax revenue every year to ensure that our schools and communities have the resources to educate and support our students;

WHEREAS, USC research shows that a majority of commercial property owners already are assessed at close to market value, making the current system inequitable among businesses, benefitting a relatively small number of properties owned by the largest corporations and wealthy owners who have held land for a long period of time;

WHEREAS, the Schools and Local Communities Funding Act has qualified for the November 2020 ballot;

WHEREAS, the measure invests about \$4.5 billion annually for school and community college districts, over and above Proposition 98 funding;

WHEREAS, the Schools and Local Communities Funding Act will also provide billions in funding annually for cities, counties, and special districts for affordable housing, parks, libraries, health and human services, libraries, and public infrastructure;

WHEREAS, the measure levels the playing field for businesses that already pay their fair share in our communities and exempts all small business owners whose property is worth \$3 million or less;

WHEREAS, the Schools and Local Communities Funding Act will help alleviate the serious budget shortfalls caused by the economic crisis precipitated by the COVID-19 global pandemic and allow community colleges greater options to serve their communities;

WHEREAS, as the largest system of higher education in the state, California’s community colleges serve over two million students—training and educating today’s workforce for jobs that lead to gainful employment and upward economic mobility;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Sonoma County Junior College District Board of Trustees endorses “The California Schools and Local Communities Funding Act of 2020” ballot measure in November 2020 general election.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 11th day of August, 2020.

Student Trustee – Jocelyn Toscano*	_____
Trustee Dorothy Battenfeld	_____
Trustee Jordan Burns	_____
Trustee Don Edgar	_____
Trustee Maggie Fishman	_____
Trustee Jeff Kunde	_____
Trustee W. Terry Lindley	_____
Trustee Mariana Martinez	_____

Ayes:

Noes:

Absent/Abstaining:

*Student Trustee – Advisory Vote

Secretary to the Board of Trustees