



Washington State Senate

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Olympia, WA 98504-0464

Democratic Caucus

Phone: (360) 786-7350
FAX: (360) 786-7020

The Honorable Mark Schoesler
Senate Republican Caucus Leader
Washington State Senate

Dear Sen. Schoesler,

January 18, 2017

We are writing to request expedited action on HB 1059 or its companion SB 5023, also known as the levy cliff bill.

Our state's schools are currently writing their budgets for the 2018 school year. We urge the Senate to act quickly to pass one of these bills to extend the levy lid one year and provide certainty to Washington's 1.1 million school kids and their teachers.

Without action, our school districts will have to account for a cut of \$358 million – the largest cut to basic education in our state's history.

The good news is this is a completely preventable problem. Even better, the fix has bipartisan support.

Sen. Rivers sponsored this idea last year in [SB 6353](#). The House companion bill received nearly unanimous support in that chamber and was passed out of the Republican-controlled Senate Education Committee on an 8-1 vote on Feb. 25 of last year.

During the operating budget debate on Feb. 26, an amendment to include this idea in the budget received 25 votes.

We know you also understand the importance of allowing our school districts certainty when it comes to budgeting. In April 2015, you said, "School districts face a budget-planning deadline of May 15, and without clear direction, they must send out pink slips to teachers and other employees. They also can't start hiring the new teachers both chambers have agreed to fund."

To further illustrate the widespread devastation inaction on this issue will cause, please find attached a spreadsheet that shows what each of Washington's 295 school districts stand to lose if Senate Republicans fail to act. In fact, the Othello School District in your district stands to lose about a million dollars.

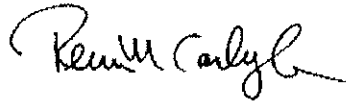
Washington's 1.1 million school kids, their parents and our state's teachers deserve action. We are united in our commitment to solve our state's K-12 funding crisis this year. Extending the levy lid one year to give them the peace of mind they need, will in no way whatsoever deter us from our common goal of fully and fairly funding education in this state. Teachers and school administrators need to focus on educating kids, not whether or not they're going to need to make devastating budget cuts.

We hope we can count on you to join us in this cause.

Sincerely,



Senator Andy Billig
3rd Legislative District



Senator Reuven Carlyle
36th Legislative District



Senator Maralyn Chase
32nd Legislative District



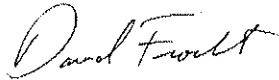
Senator Annette Cleveland
49th Legislative District




Senator Steve Conway
29th Legislative District



Senator Jeannie Darnelle
27th Legislative District



Senator David Frockt
46th Legislative District



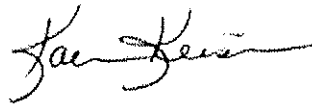
Senator Bob Hasegawa
11th Legislative District



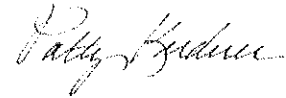
Senator Steve Hobbs
44th Legislative District



Senator Sam Hunt
22 Legislative District



Senator Karen Keiser
33rd Legislative District



Senator Patty Kuderer
48th Legislative District



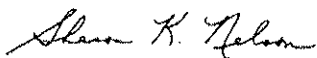
Senator Marko Liias
21st Legislative District



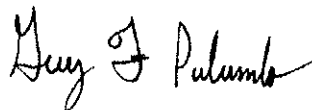
Senator John McCoy
38th Legislative District



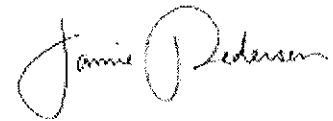
Senator Mark Mullet
5th Legislative District



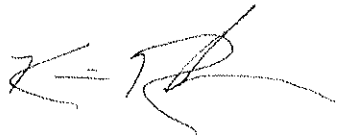
Senator Sharon Nelson
34th Legislative District



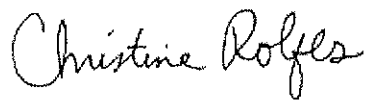
Senator Guy Palumbo
1st Legislative District



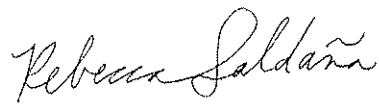
Senator Jamie Pedersen
43rd Legislative District



Senator Kevin Ranker
40th Legislative District



Senator Christine Rolfes
23rd Legislative District



Senator Rebecca Saldaña
37th Legislative District



Senator Dean Takko
19th Legislative District



Senator Kevin Van De Weg
34th Legislative District



Senator Lisa Wellman
41st Legislative District