



California Federation of Teachers
American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO

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CFT on budget: “It will hurt millions of Californians”

CFT President Marty Hittelman released the following statement in response to the budget agreement announced today:

The budget agreement outlined today fails to provide adequate education funding. It undermines vital health and human services that students need to achieve their best. This budget, due to the Republicans’ irresponsible no-tax pledge, depends on gimmicks that push real solutions into the future.

The governor compromised when he put forward a budget that included a sales tax, despite his oft-stated aversion to new taxes, because he recognized the severity of the need for revenue. The Democrat-led Assembly compromised when it included billions of dollars of cuts alongside its proposal to raise revenues from those who could afford it best, the wealthiest Californians. The only group that refused to compromise was the Republican caucus. As a result of their ideological inflexibility, this proposed budget agreement is only a temporary fix, and it will hurt millions of Californians.

Our public schools have already experienced more than \$500 million in unexpected budget cuts this year—forcing many schools and colleges to lay off teachers and education support professionals as well eliminating art, music, and vocational education programs that help students learn and succeed. ***The budget agreement cuts an additional \$3 billion from the minimum Prop. 98 funding level.*** These cuts come at a time when California already ranks 46th in per-pupil spending, and dead last in the number of counselors, librarians and school nurses per student. The simple fact is California’s schools need additional revenues to provide our students with the education they deserve.

Polling has been consistent: Californians would prefer to solve the budget problem with increased taxes rather than still more cuts to important programs. We hope the legislature will reject this budget, and enact what is clearly the will of the people.

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