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SAN DIEGO EDUCATORS DETAIL BUDGET CUTS, CALL FOR PROGRESSIVE TAX SOLUTIONS

SAN DIEGO, CA. Today the following educators detailed the enormous harm of state budget cuts to San Diego area education: Peter Zschiesche, San Diego Community College Board Member; Richard Barrera, SD Unified School Board Member; Camille Zombro, President of San Diego Education Association; Fred Lonidier, President of the American Federation of Teachers at UCSD; Mark Wheeler, California Faculty Association Representative from San Diego State University; Kelly Mayhew, City College professor and McKinley Elementary Parent Teacher Club Board member; Jose Rodriguez, City College student; and the American Federation of Teachers Local 1931, Political Action VP and San Diego City College Professor, Jim Miller.

The press conference took place on the steps of the B Building at San Diego City College at 1:00 PM on Wednesday, November 18th.

These elected school Board members, classroom teachers and professors, students and parents, described the dire personal and social impact of the cuts and what the future will hold for local education if progressive solutions are not found for California's budget and educational crisis. SDCCD Board member Zschiesche and SDUSD Board member Barrera pledged to bring resolutions putting their respective Boards on record supporting state budget reform and progressive tax policies to adequately fund education.

Said Miller, "With the state's schools still reeling after \$18 billion dollars of cuts in K-12 through UC education funding over the past two years, California's educational infrastructure is at risk. From the elementary school classroom to the community college classroom, from high school sports and arts cuts to CSU and UC tuition raises, we have already gone a long way toward gutting our schools. While we demand more accountability from educators, we have eviscerated school budgets and forced teachers to do more with less. Now, on the brink of a new round of even more devastating cuts, the Golden State's future is in peril. It is our contention that the social contract in the state of California is being ripped up in the service of a cynical "no new taxes" pledge."

"While Californians routinely tell pollsters that they don't want their taxes raised, they also tell them that they are against cuts in education and favor more funding for schools. The time to end this collective disconnect is now. The public needs to know that unless we find more revenue for our schools, the education system in California will not "do more with less," it will do less, and decline in quality while costs and demand rises. The status quo is a recipe for disaster. "

The educators announced their support for Board resolutions that formally endorse this position in the San Diego Community College District and San Diego Unified School District, and called on other boards in the county to do the same.

The American Federation of Teachers, represents nearly 6,000 faculty and staff in the San Diego and Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College Districts. Whether it's job training, preparation for four year colleges, or skill building, the American Federation of Teachers is committed to quality public education.

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