

## California Teachers Association

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## ***CTA Files School Funding Initiative to Protect Students, Schools from Deeper Budget Cuts and Ensure Future Funding*** **1 Cent Sales Tax Increase Would Benefit K-12 Schools, Community Colleges**

**BURLINGAME** – As the ongoing state budget crisis forces billions of dollars in cuts to public education, the California Teachers Association today filed an initiative that would implement a one-cent sales tax to provide new, ongoing funding for public schools and colleges that cannot be cut, delayed or diverted by the governor or the Legislature.

“California’s budget process is broken and our students and schools are suffering the consequences,” said David A. Sanchez, president of the 340,000-member CTA. “More students are being squeezed into already overcrowded classrooms, more than 10,000 teachers and education support professionals have been laid off, while art, music, technical and vocational education programs are being eliminated. The future of an entire generation of students is at stake.”

Already ranking 46<sup>th</sup> in the nation in per-student funding, California schools and colleges have been cut by more than \$3.5 billion in the past year and face another \$4 billion in cuts under the budget plan approved Thursday by the Legislature. The Republican budget proposal would cut schools by \$10 billion.

“School funding has been delayed for months on end while politicians fight over the state budget plan, and it’s clear that lawmakers are unable to reach agreement on raising the revenues needed to fund our schools. It’s time for stable and independent funding that cannot be cut by the Legislature or diverted for other uses,” continued Sanchez.

With strict accountability measures, the Public School Investment and Accountability Act would ensure that taxpayer money is directed toward student learning and focused in the classroom. The new \$5 billion to \$6 billion generated annually could be spent to reduce class sizes in all grades; provide adequate and up-to-date textbooks and materials; provide quality teacher training; hire additional counselors, librarians and critical education support staff; restore arts and career technical programs; and recruit and retain highly qualified teachers for every school. None of the money can be spent on administrative costs and any misuse of funds is punishable by law.

*(more)*

***The 340,000-member CTA is affiliated with the 3.2 million-member National Education Association.***

*Public School Investment and Accountability Act - 2222*

“One way to improve our economy is by providing businesses with a well-educated workforce. These budget cuts are forcing community colleges to turn away students who want to learn the skills needed to succeed in the workplace,” said Sanchez. “California must do better, our students deserve better, and our future depends on it.”

CTA filed the initiative in order to qualify for a possible special election in 2009. The State Council of Education, CTA’s top governing body comprised of more than 800 democratically elected educators from across the state, will determine how the initiative moves forward at its meeting in January.

Visit [www.cta.org](http://www.cta.org) for additional information and to read the full text of the initiative.

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