

February 2, 2011

The Honorable Susan Bonilla
Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee Number 2 on Education Finance
State Capitol, Room 2188
Sacramento, CA. 95814

Dear Assemblymember Bonilla:

On behalf of the Lompoc City Council, I am writing to urge the Senate Budget Subcommittee Number 1 to reject Governor Brown's recommendation to defund public libraries. Although the State budget situation is dire and the State faces great challenges in the recession economy, public libraries have done more than their share to assist with the deficit by absorbing painful cuts of over 75% in the past decade.

Our public library is the most heavily trafficked City facility in Lompoc. The computers, reading areas, and meeting room are used six days a week by residents of all ages. The unemployment rate in the City of Lompoc is over 16%, the highest rate in Santa Barbara County. Our residents use the Lompoc Public Library to search and apply for jobs, prepare resumes and class assignments, and stay in contact with family. Through the Literacy Program, which is included in the defunding proposal, adults work with volunteer tutors to learn the reading skills that enable them to participate actively in community life – to get a driver's license, complete a job application, or read to a child. The public library is a vital resource for our residents.

The California Code notes that there should be "permanent, stable, and predictable financing for public libraries of the state through a combination of state and local revenue." Please reject the proposed \$30.4 million defunding of California's public libraries.

Sincerely,

John H. Linn
Mayor