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WA STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

September 2, 2008

Craig McLaughlin, Executive Director
State Board of Health
MS 47990
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Craig,

I understand that the Board of Health is currently conducting hearings regarding the Rule Proposal for School Environmental Health and Safety. I know that you have heard from many school districts and educational organizations with concerns about the cost burden to the schools, and I would like to add my voice to those concerns.

Of course, the safety of our children is of utmost concern to all of us. Most schools are doing everything in their power to keep their students safe, and imposing unfunded mandates on districts seems to make light of their efforts to manage their resources as efficiently as possible. I have heard from staff in one of the school districts in Kitsap County, who say they anticipate the increased cost of a new elementary school to be between $200,000 and $250,000. This is an incredible burden to place on schools already stretched too thin.

Asking school districts to choose between educating their students or improving safety measures is an untenable choice. Before you enact these rules, I request that you allow the Legislature to explore additional funding sources so we do not have to ask our schools to make this choice.

Thank you,

Christine Rolfes

Christine Rolfes

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