



SANTA MONICA - MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

May 2, 2019

The Honorable Jerry Hill
Senator, 13th District
State Capitol, Room 5035
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re.: SCA 5 (Hill)

Position: Support

Dear Senator Hill:

On behalf of Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Board of Education, I am writing in support of Senate Constitutional Amendment (SCA) 5, which would allow voters statewide to decide whether school district voters can impose, extend, or increase a parcel tax with 55% voter approval, rather than the current two-thirds vote requirement.

Parcel taxes are one of the few ways local school districts are able to raise revenue to supplement the funds they receive, but they remain inaccessible to most communities given the high two-thirds voter threshold. Only one in four of California school districts have attempted to get a parcel tax approved, and an even fewer (about one in eight) has succeeded in doing so.

More than 80% of the 26 local school parcel tax measures that failed in California from 2012 to 2017 would have passed if a supermajority vote of 55% was required for approval, instead of a two-thirds vote.

SCA 5 would create a more equitable and fair supermajority voting threshold for school district parcel taxes. The legislation would also require that a proposition for a local school district parcel tax meet several conditions before being placed on the ballot for district voters, including a requirement the school district governing board conduct an annual independent financial audit of parcel tax proceeds.

For these reasons, we are proud to support SCA 5.

Sincerely,

Ben Drati
Superintendent

SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

1651 Sixteenth Street • Santa Monica • California 90404-3891 • (310) 450-8338 • www.smmusd.org

Board of Education: Craig Foster • Oscar de la Torre • Jon Kean • Maria Leon Vazquez Laurie

Lieberman • Ralph Mechur • Richard Tahvildaran-Jesswein

Superintendent: Ben Drati