Message From The Chair

In last month’s Message from the Chair I highlighted C.A.S.H.’s advocacy in support of getting a much-needed school bond on the ballot, the Implementation Committee’s discussion of funding School Facility Program (SFP) projects beyond bond authority, and that the state planned to sell $1.3 billion in bonds in April. Because these are significant issues for C.A.S.H., in this month’s Message I wanted to share the progress we have made on these issues.

Schools Included in Bond Sale

Last month I reported that C.A.S.H. has been advocating for inclusion of funding for school facilities projects in the April bond sale. I am very pleased to announce that the State of California sold $1.3 billion in various purpose General Obligation bonds, and funding for school facilities projects was included. According to the State Treasurer’s Office (STO), Office of Public School Construction (OPSC) school construction programs will receive $619 million out of $890 million that was available for new money bond proceeds, $30.4 million of which is for Proposition 47 projects, $251.1 million for Proposition 55 projects and $338 million for Proposition 1D projects. The $230 million in remaining funds went to state transportation programs funded by Proposition 1B. This is a significant accomplishment and a testament to the engagement of our members, as well as the tenacity of the C.A.S.H. organization.

Method of Approval of SFP Projects Beyond Bond Authority

The State Allocation Board’s (SAB) Implementation Committee met on Friday, April 13, and the agenda included a continuation of the discussion on methods for accepting, processing and tracking School Facility Program (SFP) project funding applications once bond authority is exhausted.

The meeting began with OPSC staff providing an overview of five options for accepting and processing SFP projects. Once again, it was clear that there was support from school districts for an “Approved but Unfunded” list because it would provide continuity for school districts and would be consistent with past practice and current regulation. As a member of the Committee, I expressed C.A.S.H.’s strong preference for continuing an “Approved but Unfunded” list because it would provide school districts with the certainty that their projects meet existing SFP program requirements. Assistant Executive Officer (AEO) Bill Savidge summarized the nature of the Committee’s challenge as balancing the needs of school districts with the state’s need for an affirmative acknowledgement that SAB approval does not guarantee funding. Mr. Savidge stated that it is his intent to communicate to the SAB that the majority of Committee members support continuing the “Approved but Unfunded” list because it would provide school districts with the certainty that their projects meet existing SFP program requirements.

April Bond Sale Includes Schools!

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The CASH Register solicits articles on school facility-related topics from the membership. If you are interested in submitting an article, please send it or a letter of inquiry to: Editor, CASH Register editorial office, 1130 K Street - Suite 210, Sacramento, CA 95814. Sorry, we are unable to return or acknowledge unpublished manuscripts. The views expressed herein are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Coalition for Adequate School Housing, its board, staff or general membership.
It is anticipated that this item will be presented to the full SAB at their May 23, 2012 meeting, and we expect this to be a hot debate. Please join us at the May SAB meeting to ensure your voice is heard on this important issue.

**AB 1903 (Buchanan)**

Assembly Members Joan Buchanan and Curt Hagman have introduced AB 1903 which would suspend the option of levying Level III developer fees for two years, beginning January 1, 2013. AB 1903 would be another cut to schools and would essentially cut off the third leg of our three-legged stool that is already in peril of tipping over. C.A.S.H. has urged our members to submit letters to their legislative representatives expressing their opposition to the bill, and has made a letter template available to school districts for this purpose (available on the C.A.S.H. website in April 19 Latest News Update). AB 1903 was heard on April 25th in the Assembly Education Committee and the resulting vote does not bode well for school districts and county offices. C.A.S.H. will continue to strongly oppose this piece of legislation. We will be sharing more information regarding the potential impacts of this bill at our upcoming Local School Financing Emporiums in Sacramento and Ontario in May. If you have not yet registered for these events, which by the way are *FREE* for school district and county office personnel, please visit the C.A.S.H. website for registration information.