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Parent Name/Nobre De Padre

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Address/Dirección

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City, State & Zip/ Ciudad, Estado y Codigo Postal

Honorable Nick R. Thompson  
2120 Main St.  
Suite 208  
Fort Myers, FL 33901

Dear Representative Thompson,

We have been hearing about the current projections for the state revenues for 2009-2010 and are seriously concerned about the impact it will have on the quality of education in our public schools. We have seen estimates that suggest that as much as a \$4 billion general revenue shortfall is possible next year. If this is true, the projected proposed public education share of this amount calculates to be \$1.4 billion statewide. Coupled with the projections for a decrease in school district local property tax revenues of almost \$600 million, it appears that there will be a nearly \$2 billion deficit for public school budgets next year if nothing is done statewide to mitigate these shortfalls.

Recognizing that the implementation of the Constitutional Class Size Reduction Requirements has cost the state over \$370 million since its inception, we need you to actively change the implementation language to make the current "school average" the final step in this implementation process and eliminate this huge drain on our limited state resources of funding.

The legislature, with help from the DOE, created the definition and implementation language of the Constitutional Class Size Reduction Requirements. The statute was written in a progressive manner that continued to move the averaging calculations from the district level, to the school level and now to the class level. There has been no demonstrative proof that the final two levels of implementation will have a positive impact on education. In fact, there are compelling arguments that the final two levels of implementation will actually harm educational performance by reducing flexibility of teacher assignment at the school level.

The implementation of the final two levels of the statutory language is neither academically or financially prudent so the only reason why it is not being changed has to be based upon a politically motivated agenda, something Florida taxpayers and our children can't afford. By supporting a change in the current legislation that eliminates the final two levels of implementation language, in essence, will adopt the Class Size Amendment as voted by our constituents but gives the flexibility to control the number based at the school level. Since we grade our education statewide at this level, it is not only prudent but also educationally sound and cost effective.

Please assist us by providing your support in this no-cost solution that will have a huge impact on the amount of useful funding that can be provided to our educational system.

Sincerely,

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Signature/Firma

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Date/Fecha