

Simple Majority for Bonds

WSPTA Testimony on HB 1184, HJR 4203

2/14/19 House Education Committee 1:30 p.m.

Dear Chair Santos and Members of the Committee,

I am Sherry Rudolph, here today representing Washington State PTA, the state's oldest and largest child advocacy organization. In fact, National PTA was founded on February 17th, 1897 to better the lives of every child in health, education and safety.

I am a parent and long-time volunteer and live in the 45th Legislative district.

We support House Bill 1184 and joint resolution 4203, as they align with one of our long-term resolutions adopted by our members in 1986; and one of our Top Five 2019 Legislative priorities - Simple Majority for Bonds, by delegates last fall.

Tuesday's election saw the passage of several bond measures. For some, however, the measures had been tried multiple times and passed at a simple majority vote, but not at the 60%.

Parents sending their children off to school expect a healthy and safe school environment, the space to learn and play, the room to work collaboratively or in flexible environments. They want the space for their children to enjoy a seated lunch of 20 minutes, libraries that encourage reading and exploration, and hands-on courses like shop, robotics, computers, art and music. They have supported smaller class sizes in the early years and building more classrooms to support full-day Kindergarten.

It is truly time to ask the voters to set aside this super high threshold, and to allow our districts to build, preserve or modernize the school buildings where we are sending our children.

We do have one request for an amendment, however, and it is something that was removed when the threshold for school levies was reduced to simple majority. Our resolution from 33 years ago includes our commitment to advocate for policies that remove the 40 percent validation requirement – reasoning that a child's safe and healthy learning environment shouldn't need validation, it's a basic provision of that community.

Every child in our state deserves a healthy, safe and conducive learning environment. 1184 and 4203, with the 40 percent validation amended, helps our communities to provide just that.