



**From:** July 22-23, 2020 Board Meeting-Public Comment  
**To:** Meeting Info  
**Subject:** [External] July 22-23, 2020 Board Meeting-Public Comment  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 22, 2020 9:02:23 PM

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Name:  
E-mail Address:  
Phone:

Agenda Item(s):

3. Discussion with Proponents and Opponents

Comment:

July 23, 2020 Board of Equalization State of California Dear Board of Equalization Members, The Liberty Hill Foundation strongly supports the Schools & Communities First initiative -- a measure that would close corporate property tax loopholes in order to reclaim investments for essential workers, local governments, and schools. Liberty Hill has been working to advance social, economic, racial and environmental justice in the Los Angeles region since 1976 through grants, training and alliance-building. This measure is 100% aligned with our vision and mission. Even before this pandemic, California's schools and local governments were in desperate need of resources and support. Whether addressing affordable housing, homelessness, educational equity, local basic services, public health, or environmental sustainability, most of our schools, community colleges and local governments are starved for needed resources to fully meet the needs of our most vulnerable, as well as many other Californians. As a philanthropic organization, we have stepped up our support of nonprofit organizations serving the people and communities most devastated by the pandemic and its repercussions. However, the resources of foundations are limited, and it is time for us to find more structural solutions to our chronic underfunding of basic services and the looming budget deficit we face in this coming and future years. Only government can do that. As California's leaders make critical decisions about rebuilding in the wake of the pandemic, Schools & Communities First offers a strategy to not just restore the prosperous parts of California's economy, but to also take significant steps toward improving on the shortcomings that held us back even in the best of times. Now, more than ever, we need the kind of reform that Schools & Communities First provides, and we simply can't afford corporate property tax loopholes at the expense of our state's future. Schools & Communities First would reclaim \$12 billion for our critical local services (such as first responders and public hospitals), schools, and essential public workers by closing corporate property tax loopholes that have overwhelmingly benefited those at the top for decades. In fact, a study by the University of Southern California showed that, with such a measure, 78% of the revenue would be generated by only 6% of commercial and industrial properties – illustrating the fact that a fraction of top corporations have not paid their fair share. Moreover, this initiative would protect homeowners and renters, small businesses, and agriculture from any changes. This is a choice between protecting tax breaks for those at the top or supporting our schools, local governments, and essential workers at a time when we need it most. Liberty Hill Foundation strongly urges you to support Schools & Communities First. Thank you for your support. Sincerely, Michele Prichard Senior Director for Strategic Initiatives Liberty Hill Foundation