



STATE OF WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

PO Box 47990 • Olympia, Washington 98504-7990

March 24, 2008

The Honorable Rosemary McAuliffe, Chair
The Honorable Rodney Tom, Vice Chair
The Honorable Curtis King, Ranking Minority Member
Early Learning & K-12 Education Committee
Washington State Senate
Post Office Box 40482
Olympia, Washington 98504-0482

Dear Senators McAuliffe, Tom, and King:

Thank you for your March 12 letter concerning the State Board of Health's efforts to modernize its school environmental health and safety rules. The full Board will discuss your request at its next regularly scheduled meeting on May 14.

As your letter mentioned, the Board is hosting a series of workshops to ensure the technical clarity of the final published draft. There was considerable uncertainty about how to interpret earlier discussion drafts. As a result, efforts to estimate costs for complying with those drafts, while conducted in good faith, often bore little relationship to the intent of the rule. The workshops are intended to eliminate confusion that stems from unclear language and to clearly articulate remaining areas of substantive disagreement.

The Board considers both benefits and costs in all its rule deliberations and welcomes any opportunities to discuss the potential fiscal impacts of its rules with the Legislature and the Office of Financial Management. The Department of Health (DOH) has begun working on a significant rule analysis and will be refining it as agreements emerge from the workshops.

All of the parties in this rule development process share a common commitment to safe and healthy school environments. These parties include the Legislature, state agencies, local health jurisdictions, school districts, school employees, and parents. What we do not have yet is a common understanding of the rule's impacts and associated costs. By the end of April, we will have made considerable progress in clarifying intent. By the end of May, we should have a much clearer picture of possible fiscal implications.

I look forward to future conversations between the Board and interested members of the Legislature—such as yourselves and the other members of your committee—about ways

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Page 2
March 24, 2008

we can work together to protect both student safety and the financial health of our schools.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Treuman Katz". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the word "Sincerely,".

Treuman Katz
Chair

cc: Senator Dale Brandland
Senator Lisa Brown
Senator Karen Fraser
Representative Bill Fromhold
Representative Joyce McDonald
House Capital Budget Committee Members
Marty Brown, Office of the Governor
Christina Hulet, Executive Policy Office
State Board of Health Members
Craig McLaughlin, State Board of Health