

Members Deadlocked on Dem Budget Proposal

In a snap poll of Bay Area Council members on the [new Democratic proposal](#) for a state budget, we uncovered the quandary facing our state's leaders. About half of our members said they thought the Council should support the proposal and half said we should oppose it. The vote leaned towards support, but many supporters said they would hold their nose in the act, while those in opposition were much more strident in their opinion (disliking the increased taxes, the targeting of specific industries or even companies, and bad precedent the "end run" would have on how government operates). Without a preponderance of unified views, the Council will not act on the current Democratic proposal, but we will support the [Governor's objectives of securing](#) more stimuli and improving the business climate in any budget proposal.

Ca. Education Reform Effort Advances

As readers may remember, at the end of the last legislative session – two months and a lifetime ago – the Bay Area Council successfully guided [SB 1298](#) over the finish line, the only piece of the once grand "Year of Education Reform" legislation that kick started a new best-in-class education data system. The campaign continues with a major piece of the puzzle emerging this week. Council member, McKinsey & Co., released [a massive report](#) on how such a data system would work. They artfully expressed the situation in this manner:

Major recent studies – including the Governor's Committee on Educational Excellence, the State Superintendent's P-16 report and the multi-million dollar "Getting Down to Facts" studies – all came to the shared conclusion: California is in desperate need of an improved education data system. Throughout California, thousands of educators struggle every day to teach the highest standards in the country to one of the most diverse and challenging student populations in the U.S. Too often teachers are not able to get the information they need to better individualize instruction for every child. Too often educators are not able to learn from their colleagues in other parts of the state who are succeeding with students facing similar challenges as their own. As a result, education leaders have talked for years about how to improve our education data system and what an effective statewide system would look like.

Thanks to McKinsey, we now know what the system should look like. The next step for the Council is to help with legislation to get that system built and funded.

Story of the Week

[The San Francisco Chronicle covers](#) the immediate stop of payments to state public works projects as a result of the cash crunch created by the budget crisis. ([Master list of projects](#))

Quote of the Week

"It would be easy to fire back at the Governor for his insults. I'm damn proud of what the Legislature did today. Is there any other credible, politically acceptable plan put forward by anyone to make an \$18 billion-plus dent in California's budget deficit? The answer is no." – [Senator Darrell Steinberg](#) responding to the Governor's veto threat.

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