

**Newsletter: July 2012**

\*\*\*\*\*

**July Meeting: Thursday, July 26, 2012, 6:15 pm at Crow Canyon Country Club**

**SPEAKER: Sandra Perez MHA/MPA- Director of the California Office of the Patient Advocate**

**TOPIC: The Affordable Care Act has been approved. What happens next with individual healthcare coverage and patient care? What are the changes?**



Sandra Perez is Director of the California Office of the Patient Advocate (OPA) representing the interests of over 20 million commercial health plan members. In this capacity, she advocates for the consumer rights and health care quality for all patients in California. Under her leadership, OPA has developed and promoted the State's annual [Health Care Quality Report Card](#), rated as a top site by the Informed Patient Institute; consumer education materials in multiple languages including an award-winning guide; [How to Use Your Health Plan](#); and implemented a statewide social marketing campaign so that all consumers are well equipped with the necessary information and tools to make informed health care decisions. Ms. Perez is committed to working collaboratively with purchasers, elected officials, consumer advocates, health plans, medical groups and other stakeholders to identify ways to improve the quality of health care in California.

Sandra Perez is Director of the California Office of the Patient Advocate (OPA) representing the interests of over 20 million commercial health plan members. In this capacity, she advocates for the consumer rights and health care quality for all patients in California. Under her leadership, OPA has developed and promoted the State's annual [Health Care Quality Report Card](#), rated as a top site by the Informed Patient Institute; consumer education materials in multiple languages including an award-winning guide,

Sandra Perez has a Master of Arts in Public Administration from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and a Masters of Science in Health Services from University of Southern California respectively. Her Bachelor of Arts from UC Davis is in Community Health and Nutrition. Ms. Perez is also a graduate of the Harvard University's Executive Leadership Program in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Leadership California; the National Hispana Leadership Institute in Washington, D.C.; Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce Leadership Sacramento; and the Center for Creative Leadership in La Jolla, California

**LOCAL SPEAKER: Susanna Schlendorf- Chief of Staff for Assemblymember Joan Buchanan**

Susanna will update us on bills in the Assembly and Joan's positions on them

**Dinner is \$25 per person for members and their invited guests, \$30 for others.**

**A limited number of seats are available for those just wishing to hear the presentations-  
Suggested donation is \$5**

**RSVP: Mail checks, made out to Jim Donnelly, to 373 Century Circle, Danville, CA 94526  
Or call him at (925) 570-9289**

**Please RSVP no later than Monday, July 23, 2012.**

**Note: Remember if you RSVP and no-show, you may be billed for the meal.**

## **In this Issue**

- President's Corner
- Danville 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade
- Annual DPCCC Picnic, August 11, Castle Park, Walnut Creek
- Annual SRVDC Bar-B-Que, Saturday, September 8 @ Jim Donnelly's house in Danville
- Member Editorial
- Reports from our Elected Officials
- Coming Events

## **Presidents Corner**

I'm writing this column while enjoying a fishing vacation with my wife, son and grandson at Fall Creek Falls State Park in Tennessee. We were lucky that the heat wave they have been having back here broke about two days before we arrived. The park is lovely with a fishing lake, many recreational activities and the Fall Creek Falls. These falls are the highest falls in the US east of the Rockies. All in all we are having a great time. I have even managed to avoid the depressing state of the nation a little.

Being in Tennessee I am seeing a lot more negative ads toward the administration and democrats in general. What really disturbs me about these ads is that there is no way to tell who is actually behind their funding, thank you Supreme Court and "Citizen's United" Tennessee is definitely not the Bay Area and the political conversations I keep overhearing tend to make me shutter. They are much more conservative here and I definitely do not fit in.

This month I have included an opinion piece written by Paul Buchheit and published in the Nation of Change web paper. His editorial tries to put right some of the lies being fostered upon the American public against union and unionized government workers. I get very angered over people bashing these workers and with trying to blame them for the problems our cities, counties, states and country are having. They are not the ones who are living high off the hog and pushing us toward insolvency. They are workers like some many of us who are only trying to get by and to provide their children with a shot at the American dream- a better life in the future. Unfortunately the deck is being stacked against them. On the average public worker's

salary try to afford to send two children to a public university while trying to save for the future- Good Luck! As my accountant admitted to me this year, he has finalized realized what I meant when I said that His taxes have gone up in the last 5 years. He has three children in public universities and the cost has risen almost 25% in three years. I that is not a tax increase, I don't know what is.

The truth, as I see it, is that a group within the rich and powerful (read that as the 0.1%) are making a concerted effort to further enrich themselves while driving the earning power and wealth of the middle class downward. They are carrying out a very effective media campaign to fool the American people to blame the unions and the poor and downtrodden for what is happening in this country. And that is a pure crock of s\*\*\*! What we are experiencing in this country today is very similar to what the rich and elite did to the average worker back in the 20's and early 30's. The difference then was that there was a growing unionization effort that promised a better future for the workers and their children. Where is that movement today? The amount of money the Koch brothers and other far right wing fanatics are putting into this election is staggering. If they succeed they will break the unions ability to help finance Democrats and we will see many more of their ilk elected to office for the express purpose of rolling back taxes for the rich, rolling back worker health and safety regulations, environmental regulations, consumer protections and etc. It is a frightening thought to me and I believe to many of you.

The UDC is finalizing details of opening a Walnut Creek election office either later this month or in early August. We will be looking for volunteers to help with phone banking and other activities. This will be our chance to do something positive to influence the election and maybe help blunt the efforts discussed above.

Well it is time to go to bed so that I can get up early and go fishing for bass, blue gill, cat fish and crappie in the morning. They are not salmon or trout but at least it is fishing. I hope all is going well for you back in the Bay area and forward to getting back there next week. I

Have a good month!

Jim Donnelly- President SRVDC

## **Danville 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade**

Thank you to all of you who joined us in the Danville 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade. We had quite a turnout with our three elected officials, Congressman George Miller, Congressman Pete Stark and State Senator Mark DeSaulnier. Members of our club as well as the Tri-Valley and diablo Valley Democratic Clubs joined with us to show our support to our Democratic officials and to show the good people of Danville that there are Democrats living in the valley. Overall the crowd was quite supportive with only a few of the boo-birds out. The pictures below highlight some of our part of the parade.



## **Annual DPCC Picnic, Saturday, August 11, Castle Park, Walnut Creek**

The Democratic Party of Contra Costa County is having their 83<sup>rd</sup> Annual Picnic at the Castle Park in Walnut Creek on Saturday, August 11, 2012. This is a major fund raiser for the DPCCC and the funds will go to support a Walnut Creek Democratic office for this fall and for other activities in support of electing Democrats in November. Tickets are \$35. Please make every effort to attend this event and support our efforts for this fall. There will be good food and interesting presentations by our local elected officials at the event. Wine, beer and other drinks will be available for purchase.

## **Annual SRVDC Bar-B-Que, Saturday, September 8, Jim Donnelly's House in Danville**

We are having our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Bar-B-Que on Saturday, September 8, 2012 from 12- 4 PM at Jim Donnelly's house in Danville. This year we are making this a fund raising event to support our local Democratic activities for this fall. There will be smoked salmon and halibut (the amount depends on how well fishing goes for Jim's upcoming trip to Alaska in August), Smoked tri-tips, chicken and sausages as well as a Caesar salad prepared by Jim. There will also be plenty of Jim's famous Margaritas to cool off with. We are asking people to bring an appetizer, side dish or desert to round out the meal.

We will be joined by Congressman Pete Stark, State Senator Mark DeSaulnier, Assemblywomen Joan Buchanan and other locally elected officials and prominent Democrats.

We are requesting a donation of \$15 per member and \$20 per non-member with the proceeds going to either the Walnut Creek office or for a newspaper ad in support of our Democratic principles before the election.

## **Member Editorials**

Each month we invite you to present your views on about any subject you wish to discuss. This is an important way to understand what are major concerns for our members. Surely there are things going on that make your blood boil. Let it out, express your opinions here.

From Gordon Miller, Diablo Valley Democratic Club

### **What PPACA (“Obamacare”) Means to You**

#### **Effective now**

- You can keep your physician and health insurance.
- Adults with existing conditions eligible to join a temporary high-risk pool, to be superseded by the health care exchange in 2014.
- Insurers prohibited from imposing lifetime dollar limits on essential benefits, like hospital stays, in new policies.
- Dependents (children) can remain on parents' insurance plans until their 26th birthday, including those that no longer live with their parents, aren't tax dependents, are no longer a student, or are married.
- Insurers are prohibited from excluding pre-existing medical conditions for children under 19 (except in grandfathered individual health insurance plans).
- Insurers annually capping your coverage restricted now, prohibited by 2014.
- Insurers prohibited from dropping policyholders when they get sick.
- Insurers are required to reveal details about administrative and executive expenditures.
- Insurers must spend a certain percent of premium dollars on eligible expenses, subject to various waivers and exemptions; if an insurer fails to meet this requirement, there is no penalty, but it must pay a rebate to policyholders.
- Chain restaurants are required to display the calories in their foods on menus, drive-through menus, and vending machines. Full compliance by 2013-14.

#### **Effective by August 1**

- New plans must cover some preventive services such as mammograms and colonoscopies without charging a deductible, co-pay or coinsurance.
- Women's Preventive Services (including well-woman visits, support for breastfeeding equipment, contraception, and domestic violence screening) covered without cost sharing.

#### **Effective by January 1, 2014**

- Insurers are prohibited from discriminating against or charging higher rates for any individuals based on pre-existing medical conditions.
- No more annual spending caps by insurers.
- Establish health insurance exchanges and subsidization of insurance premiums for individuals in households with income up to 400% of the poverty line.

In two words – **more security** for you and your loved ones!

You will no longer be one illness and one job change away from bankruptcy and destitution. You will not be tied to a job because of health insurance. From Wikipedia. ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patient\\_Protection\\_and\\_Affordable\\_Care\\_Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patient_Protection_and_Affordable_Care_Act))

Although this is not a member editorial, I felt that it is an important bit of information needed to counteract the malicious campaign being carried out by the right against Union workers and especially union government workers.

Paul Buchheit, Nation of Change / Op-Ed Published: Monday 25 June 2012

The wealthiest Americans have a long-held delusion, passed along through their media outlets to the rest of us, that they pick up the bill for most of our country's needs, and that middle-class public workers and unions benefit from their generosity.

The Facts Make It Clear: Public Workers and Unions are Not Overpaid

The wealthiest Americans have a long-held delusion, passed along through their media outlets to the rest of us, that they pick up the bill for most of our country's needs, and that middle-class public workers and unions benefit from their generosity. But facts, not emotions, are needed to provide the truth. And there are plenty of eye-opening facts that refute the far-right claims.

**Fact #1:** Government employees make up 16.7% of U.S. employees and receive 17.6% of the pay.

The public vs. private "who gets higher pay?" battle has convincing arguments on both sides. Yet a careful analysis of Census Department data confirms that government employees earn less than 1% more than private sector employees. Recent (2009) compensation figures reveal that:

- 107 million private sector workers earned \$4,829 billion, an average of \$45,000
- 2.8 million federal government workers earned \$192 billion, an average of \$68,000
- 4.6 million state government workers earned \$226 billion, an average of \$48,700
- 14 million local government workers earned \$612 billion, an average of \$43,000

With all benefits included, the 21.4 million government employees make up 16.7% of U.S. employees and receive 20% of the total compensation. The higher benefits exist mainly at the federal level. For the states, government employees make up 3.6% of the U.S. workforce and receive 3.9% of the total compensation.

The federal pay advantage is largely due to higher education levels and more advanced professional skills. The Economic Policy Institute, Bureau of Economic Analysis, and Congressional Budget Office all acknowledge this. 44% of federal jobs are professional positions (lawyers, economists, engineers), compared with 32% in the private sector. Close to 50% of full-time federal and state and local government employees have college degrees, compared to 35% for private employees.



**Fact #2:** Union members make up about 12% of the workforce, but their total pay amounts to just 9.5% of adjusted gross income as reported to the IRS.

There are 14.8 million union employees, with a \$50,000 median salary. The IRS reported total adjusted gross income of \$7.8 trillion in 2009.

**Fact #3:** CEOs and financial employees, with 11.3% of adjusted gross income, made more than ALL 15 million unionized workers in the United States, and twice as much as ALL 7.4 million federal and state government workers.

This fact highlights the extreme income inequality in the nation and within the private sector. As noted above, the AVERAGE private sector worker makes about the same salary as a state or local government worker. But the MEDIAN U.S. worker salary is almost \$14,000 less, at \$26,363. While corporate executives and financial workers (about one-half of 1% of the workforce) make multi-million dollar salaries, millions of private company workers toil as food servers, clerks, medical workers, and domestic help at below-average pay. In government, on the other hand, a lower turnover rate and a higher incidence of union membership contribute to wage stability.

**Fact #4:** The total annual pension contribution of the 50 states is about the same as the total state taxes avoided by corporations.

According to the Pew Center, the latest available annual pension contribution by the 50 states amounted to just under \$60 billion.

According to a Citizens for Tax Justice report on the state tax avoidance of 265 large companies, only 3% of the required 6.2% was paid. At that rate, the nonpayment on \$1.8 trillion in 2010 corporate profits would amount to just under \$60 billion.

Federal tax avoidance is much worse. While corporate profits have doubled to \$1.8 trillion in less than ten years, the corporate income tax rate, which for thirty years hovered around the 20-25% level, suddenly dropped to 10% after the recession. It has remained there for three years. That's a \$270 billion nonpayment. Makes the pension payment look puny.

## **Conclusion**

Public sector and union workers make modest salaries with hard-earned benefits. Rather than trying to reduce public sector pay, industry leaders should be addressing wage inequality in the private sector by bringing employee compensation closer to the level warranted by 30 years of productivity growth.

## **Reports from our Elected Officials**

### **Congressman George Miller**

**Rep. George Miller: Court Decision Huge Victory for the American People**  
**June 28, 2012 10:59 AM**

WASHINGTON – U.S. Rep. George Miller (D-Calif.), the senior Democratic member of the House Education and the Workforce Committee and one of the chief House authors of the Affordable Care Act, issued the following statement after today's Supreme Court decision on the historic health reform law.

"The Supreme Court makes it clear – You're covered. This decision is a huge victory for the American people, small businesses, women, children and seniors.

“Now, the threat that remains to your continued access to affordable health care and to the Medicare guarantee is from the Republican Congress and candidate Mitt Romney who have pledged to repeal the Affordable Care Act that the Supreme Court just ruled is constitutional. Remember what Speaker Boehner said yesterday: ‘If the court does not strike down the entire law, the House will move to repeal what’s left of it.’

“I will fight to protect your health care.”

### **Congressman Jerry McNerney**

#### **McNerney Calls For A Return To "Policy Before Plumbing" On Bay Delta Plan**

Warns that new proposal from state and federal officials leaves too many questions unanswered  
June 22, 2012

Washington, D.C. – A dozen northern California lawmakers called on federal officials today to delay the imminent announcement of an expensive and potentially damaging water diversion project until more details of the plan are made available.

“The BDCP remains flawed. The newest proposal puts forth a plan of action without consideration of the consequences, costs, or how it should truly be executed. In essence, it attempts to establish an end result, regardless of the consequences for the people who live in the Delta region,” said Rep. McNerney (D-Stockton).

“I have fought and will continue to fight against any plan that includes a canal that would ship our water to southern California. We rely on maintaining a fresh and healthy Delta to protect our way of life. I will continue to stand with the farmers, small business owners and families who could have their livelihoods destroyed by a canal. A canal would devastate our local economy, costing millions of dollars and countless jobs,” continued Rep. McNerney.

The twelve California Democrats warned that the plan – as described in a recent briefing in Washington and public meeting in Sacramento – “raises far more questions than it answers, and appears to turn the maxim of ‘policy before plumbing’ on its head.” The Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) proposal recently developed by state and federal officials would allow for the construction of massive tunnels – capable of draining the Sacramento River at a rate of 15,000 cubic feet per second – but delay any decisions about the uses of the project for as many as fifteen years. The members of Congress wrote that a poorly designed plan for the Bay Delta “could increase water exports from the Bay-Delta estuary — while failing to restore the Bay-Delta ecosystem and rebuild salmon and other California fisheries as required by law.”

Recent reports have described the water diversion project as capable of filling 10 Olympic-size swimming pools with Sacramento River water every minute, but the twelve members of Congress warned that the plan’s potentially damaging impacts on northern California cities and counties, the state’s economy, and the health of the Bay-Delta estuary are currently impossible to evaluate. The members of Congress called on Interior Secretary Ken Salazar and acting Commerce Secretary Rebecca Blank to release “a far more detailed description” of the proposed new framework before Gov. Jerry Brown and Secretary Salazar make any public announcement about the plan. According to recent reports, the Governor and Secretary intend to announce a final BDCP plan this summer.



U.S. Representatives George Miller, Jerry McNerney, Anna Eshoo, Mike Thompson, Doris Matsui, John Garamendi, Mike Honda, Lynn Woolsey, Jackie Speier, Barbara Lee, Zoe Lofgren and Pete Stark wrote to Interior Secretary Salazar and acting Commerce Secretary Blank:

"We ask that you not finalize or formally announce this framework until a far more detailed description is made available for review."

"[w]e do not believe it is wise to commit to massive new water pumping stations and conveyance tunnels while sustainable solutions to the problems of water quality, fish and ecosystem restoration, local impacts, and water flows are made to wait."

"There is too much at stake in the BDCP for the federal government to announce a plan that defers important decisions while an expensive and potentially damaging water diversion project is allowed to proceed."

### **Congressman John Garamendi**

### **House Republicans Create Zero Jobs & Waste Time on 31st Vote to Repeal Health Care Law, Garamendi Votes to Preserve Coverage**

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman John Garamendi (D-Fairfield, CA), California's Insurance Commissioner for eight years, today voted against the 31st attempt by House Republicans to repeal the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. H.R. 6079, the Patients' Rights Repeal Act, passed the House by a 240-182 vote, with 236 Republicans voting against patient protections and 182 Democrats voting for patient protections. Like 30 times previously, the House of Representatives wasted its time, as this bill will never be considered by the Senate.

"I should be saying today that the House of Representatives voted for a good bipartisan jobs bill to get Americans back to work ... but I can't. The Republican leadership in Congress would rather waste time on meaningless theater than do something about jobs," **Congressman Garamendi said.** "Yet again, they scheduled a vote to allow 17 million children with pre-existing conditions to once again be denied coverage and to raise prescription drug costs for more than five million seniors."

A vote to repeal the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and the Patient's Bill of Rights within it is a vote to:

- Increase the deficit by \$124 billion over the next 10 years and by over \$1 trillion over the following decade, according to the latest CBO estimates available (2011).
- Cause the Medicare Trust Fund to become insolvent in 2016 – eight years earlier than under the health care law.
- Take away the guarantee for young adults that they can stay on their parents' plan until age 26. 6.6 million young adults have already taken advantage of this provision.
- Raise prescription drug costs for seniors. 5.3 million seniors in the 'donut hole' have already saved \$3.7 billion on their prescription drugs, an average of \$600 per senior.
- Take away the peace of mind that the parents of children with pre-existing conditions now have that their children cannot be denied coverage. Under the law, up to 17 million children with pre-existing conditions currently have the protection that they cannot be denied coverage by insurers.
- Allow insurance companies to once again place a lifetime limit on coverage. Already 105 million Americans are benefiting from no longer facing this limit, which can lead to a family bankruptcy.

- Raise the costs of preventive services, such as mammograms and wellness visits, for millions of Americans. 86 million Americans – including 54 million Americans in private plans and 32 million seniors in Medicare – have already received one or more free preventive services.
- Eliminate provisions that hold insurance companies accountable for double-digit premium increases.
- Eliminate savings for consumers, by removing the requirement that insurance companies spend at least 80% of premiums on medical services, not administrative costs and CEO bonuses. This summer, nearly 13 million Americans will be benefiting from rebates from insurers because of this provision.
- Raise the taxes of hundreds of thousands of small businesses by eliminating the small business health care tax credit. In 2011, 360,000 small businesses used the tax credit to help them afford health insurance for 2 million workers.
- 

More information on the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act is available at <http://www.healthcare.gov>.

As California's Insurance Commissioner, Congressman Garamendi authored a state health insurance plan that would have covered almost all Californians, but it was vetoed by then-Governor Pete Wilson. While California's Insurance Commissioner, Garamendi published "Priced Out", a report that highlighted the problems associated with health care delivery in California and offered more than 50 concrete recommendations to improve care and access. As a state legislator, Garamendi authored the Rural Health Services Act of 1976, which expanded community clinics in unserved and underserved areas and provided health care for hundreds of thousands Californians. Garamendi served as a health care advisor to then-candidate Bill Clinton during his 1991-1992 run for President.

### **Congressman Pete Stark**

#### **PRESS RELEASE: Stark, Local Labor & Business Leaders: Stop Outsourcing, Bring Jobs Home from Overseas** **Tuesday, 03 July 2012 12:27**

Stark, Local Labor & Business Leaders: Stop Outsourcing, Bring Jobs Home from Overseas

FREMONT– Today, U.S. Rep. Pete Stark (D-Fremont) joined with local business and labor leaders at Tri-Ced Community Recycling in Union City to highlight the need to stem the outsourcing of American jobs. Local leaders -- including Josie Camacho, Alameda Labor Council Executive Secretary Treasurer and Richard Valle, CEO, Tri-Ced and Alameda County Supervisor -- are calling on Congress to pass the Bring Jobs Home Act, H.R. 5542. Rep. Stark is a co-sponsor of the legislation, which would change our tax system to encourage businesses to keep jobs at home instead of sending them abroad.

Rep. Pete Stark: "Congress needs to support policies that help us export American goods, not American jobs. The Bring Jobs Home Act would provide a tax incentive for companies that bring production back to this country and eliminate tax breaks for companies that move jobs overseas. This is a simple bill and I'm urging Congressional leadership to bring it to the floor for a vote right away."

Josie Camacho, Executive Secretary Treasurer, Alameda Labor Council: "As we prepare to celebrate July 4th, we honor our country's workers who make great products and deliver great services. Working people are joining together to call for elected leaders to stop helping companies outsource jobs and instead support companies that create jobs here. People working is what will stimulate our economy."

### **State Senator Mark DeSaulnier**

#### **DeSaulnier's Privacy Bill Approved by Assembly Committee July 12, 2012**

*(Senate Bill 447 (DeSaulnier) Limits the Use of Social Security Numbers by State Agencies*  
With a 9-0 unanimous vote, the Assembly Business and Professions Committee has approved Senate Bill 447 (DeSaulnier) to prohibit state agencies from using an individual's full Social Security Number in communications with that individual, unless required to do so by federal law.

"Putting a Social Security Number in the mail should be avoided at all costs," said Senator Mark DeSaulnier (D-Concord). "The Social Security Number is used by criminals to commit identify theft against those who least expect it. We should all safe guard such identifying information and state agencies should take reasonable steps to assure that this information is protected."

The Privacy Rights Clearinghouse, a nationally respected nonprofit privacy organization in San Diego, offers the following advice, "Never print or write your Social Security Number on your checks, business cards, address labels or other identifying information." Yet, the California Employment Development Department, Department of Justice, Department of Industrial Relations, Commission on Teaching Credentialing, and possibly other agencies print full Social Security Numbers on various correspondences that include the person's name, address, and other identifying information.

The U.S. Federal Trade Commission reports that in 2010 identity theft related to government documents was the most common form of reported identity theft. This crime is often perpetuated through mail theft which is a growing issue in the United States. The practice of printing full Social Security Numbers on documents sent through the mail or correspondence via electronic mail creates undo privacy risks.

According to the United States Postal Service, in 2011 Postal inspectors arrested more than 5,500 suspects for crimes involving the mail or against the Postal Service. About half of those arrested involved mail theft and more than 750 involved mail related fraud.

SB 447 was introduced after a constituent from El Sobrante was chosen as the winner of the "There Ought to be a Law" contest. The contest, which started in 2007, invites constituents from the 7th Senate District to submit ideas for new state legislation.

SB 447 is a common sense preventative measure. This bill will be heard next in the Assembly Appropriations Committee in August.

### **Assembly Woman Joan Buchanan**

#### **Buchanan Charter School Facilities Notice Bill Signed into Law by Governor Brown**

Tuesday, 10 July 2012 14:54

SACRAMENTO – Assemblymember Joan Buchanan (D-Alamo) is pleased to announce that Governor Brown has signed Assembly Bill 1859 into law. The bill passed through both houses of the Legislature with unanimous support.

AB 1859 requires charter schools to provide a written 30-day notice to their school district of residence of any intent to apply for federal bond authority for construction or rehabilitation that would affect school district property. This notice requirement mirrors the current requirements for charter schools that seek state financing.

"This bill is about increasing communication between charter schools and public school districts on facilities issues," stated Buchanan. "The lack of notice has lead to situations in which charter schools are making plans for the rehabilitation of buildings that in some cases belong to the school district, and there is no coordination with the district."

Currently, charter schools that apply for federal bond authority through the Qualified School Construction Bond program are only required to publish a notice of their intent to apply in a newspaper of general circulation, not to notify the school district directly.

"Adding a 30-day notice requirement to the rules for federal bond authority brings those rules into line with existing statutes for state financing, allowing us to coordinate the requirements for state and federal funding so that charter schools and school districts are working with consistent criteria and rules," indicated Buchanan.

AB 1859 received the support of charter schools and public school districts. The Governor signed the bill on Tuesday and it will take effect January 1, 2013.