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## Legislative Alert: April 8, 2011



### Contact Members of the Senate Now; Cuts to K-12 Still Too High

Yesterday, after a week of closed-door negotiations, the Joint Budget Committee (JBC) introduced the state budget bill, known as the Long Bill. Although the cut to K-12 has been lowered from the Governor's proposal of \$332 million, the proposed budget and corresponding School Finance Act will cut K-12 by \$250 million. Given that school districts were already slashed by over \$260 million in 2010-11, an additional \$250 million is devastating, particularly for our small and rural districts that have very little wiggle room to begin with.

The big sticking point over the past week was whether to reinstate the state's vendor fee. It's a small percentage, about 3.3 percent of sales tax that retailers are allowed to keep in return for collecting and remitting sales tax to the state. The vendor fee has been suspended during the recession, and reinstating the vendor fee results in a loss of approximately \$65 million to the state. As the Long Bill currently stands, the vendor fee will be reinstated at a two-thirds rate, meaning the state will keep about \$20 million a year rather than \$65 million. This means K-12 has to absorb most of the \$45 million loss in revenue. CASB Deputy Executive Director Jane Urschel noted, "It's a sad day when our legislators choose a small payment to retailers over the quality education of a child."

We need you to contact the members of the Senate **now** to let them know the consequences of cutting school districts by \$250 million. **Please click on the link below to go to our Capitol Contact service where you can send a provided email to all Colorado senators. Be sure to provide your name, email address and the board of education or school district you represent. We also encourage you to provide information about the local impact of these cuts.**

Thanks for your advocacy support.

<http://capitolcontact.com/layout3.php?url=439-NSwHG6g2UrBex95o>

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