
Sample Opposition Letter #2 Regarding a Specific Bill

Mr. & Mrs. John Doe
12345 Maple Avenue
Bell, California 67890
April 20th, 2020

The Honorable Bill Brown
California State Senate [or California State Assembly]
State Capitol, Room [####]
Sacramento, California 95814

Subject: SB 456, by Senator Haste

Dear Senator Brown: [or Dear Assembly Member Brown:]

As your constituent and a registered voter, I am writing to express my concern about SB 456.

SB 456 would mandate that every child attend kindergarten before being admitted to the first grade. Parents who have chosen to delay their child's entrance into formal education, due to concern over what is best for their child's education, would be forced to choose between either: (a) starting their child's formal education before they feel it is best or (b) adding another year of school to the end of high school before they are eligible for graduation.

Under current law, parents who determine that their child would benefit by attending school at age 5 can already do so. According to the California Department of Education on March 16, 2012, 90-95% of all children of kindergarten age already attend public or private kindergarten. This bill would be burdensome to the parents of the remaining 5-10% of "kindergarten-age" children who believe it is best for their child to wait another year and skip kindergarten before beginning formal education.

The Legislature has gone on record, acknowledging that there can be disadvantages to enrolling some children in kindergarten at age 5 and that parents must be allowed to consider these disadvantages in deciding whether or not to enroll their child. In Education Code Section 48000(b) the Legislature, aware of the disadvantages, specified that *the parent or guardian is given information regarding the advantages and disadvantages and any other explanatory information about the effect of this early admittance.*

Research demonstrates that while short-term gains in some areas are experienced by children beginning their formal education at age 5, research also indicates: (1) that these gains disappear in a few years and (2) that many children experience long-lasting adverse effects from being placed into kindergarten at age five.

SB 456 would place an inappropriate financial burden on parents who have determined that it is best for their child to wait an additional year (until age 6) to enroll their children in school and who plan to enroll their child in the first grade of a private school at their own expense. Under SB 456, parents who choose to delay their child's entrance into formal education by forgoing kindergarten will be forced to undergo a time and financial penalty of adding a year of school before graduation. Enrollment into kindergarten prior to the first grade must remain optional for parents.

If there is a need to ensure continuity of education by enforcing regular attendance in public school kindergartens, the language proposed in AB 789 (as amended 4/29/12) would satisfactorily address this concern. AB 789 stated, *...if a child between the ages of 5 and 6 is enrolled in a public school kindergarten that accepts children under six years of age and attends the kindergarten for at least 30 days during the school year, the compulsory education law shall, after the 30th day of attendance, apply to the child and to that child's parents or guardian, as the case may be, without regard to the fact the child has not yet attained 6 years of age, unless the child is otherwise exempt as provided in this chapter.*

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

John Doe