

September 2, 2004

The Honorable Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Governor of California  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger:

As representatives of a broad and diverse coalition of statewide employer and teacher organizations, we are proud to enthusiastically applaud and support the recommendations of the California Performance Review (CPR) related to career and technical education (CTE) in the Golden State. The recommendations contained within this report correctly recognize that the expansion of strong CTE programs in our public school system will provide enormous benefits to our student population, workforce and jobs base, and our state's future economic vitality.

Over the past two decades, state policymakers have not made career and technical education a priority or even a desired outcome of our public education system. Thus, during this time, CTE has not been included in our state's accountability measures, received sufficient funding or been a focus for teacher recruitment efforts. As a result, many if not most CTE programs face significant cutbacks, await the prospect of closure in the near future or have already closed.

The impacts of a weakened CTE system have been felt by both our students who are increasingly leaving our public schools without employable skills and employers who face significant challenges in recruiting and retaining skilled workers to meet the needs of the marketplace.

CPR staff accurately documented the significant, and often unrecognized, benefits realized by students enrolled in CTE coursework, including: improved high school attendance and grades; higher graduation rates; the same or higher rate of enrollment in higher education; and, improved employment options upon graduation.

As you and the CPR Commission begin your deliberations on the staff recommendations provided in the report, the employer and teaching communities whom we represent respectfully request that you be guided by the following principles:

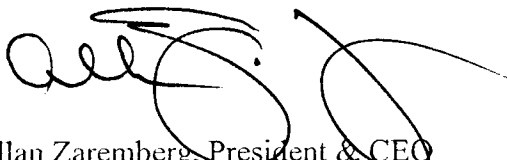
- **Accountability** – CTE must be part of the state's governance and policy accountability system and measures.

- **Rebuild the pipeline** – California needs to re-build the pipeline for skilled trades people with clear articulation of skills and knowledge throughout the K-20 education system and beyond.
- **Standards-based CTE curriculum** – curriculum must be based upon recognized, meaningful and useful skills and knowledge with application to our current and future economic needs.
- **Stronger emphasis on hands-on skills training and education** – students need to learn and develop skills by actually using their hands. This key element of CTE is being increasingly lost in the dialogue over “integration” of CTE into academic courses. CTE courses need to be maintained as hands-on skills development opportunities with actual skills development and related knowledge as the measured outcome(s).
- **Greater flexibility and choices for student learning experience** – students must not be forced to choose between either a “college” or “non-college” pathway. Choices and flexibility need to be re-introduced into our public school system so that these two pathways are NOT mutually exclusive of one another.
- **Relevancy of education to the economy** – the outcome(s) of our public education system must reflect the needs of our economy and job opportunities.
- **CTE teacher shortage and preparation** – CTE teacher recruitment must become an immediate priority in order to save hundreds of programs statewide.

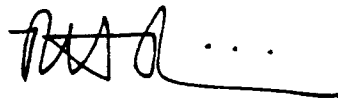
We believe that if the CPR recommendations are implemented within the context of these principles, California will have an historic opportunity to develop a world-renown, cutting-edge public education system that teaches our young people applied, “real world” skills that fully prepare them for their professional success.

Our trades need skilled workers. Our children need good paying jobs. A successful public school system values the importance of career and technical education for both our students and economy. We stand ready to support you and the Commission toward that end.


Sincerely,



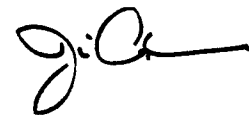
Allan Zaremberg, President & CEO  
California Chamber of Commerce



Robert Rivinius, President & CEO  
California Building Industry Association



Jack Stewart, President & CEO  
California Manufacturers & Technology  
Association



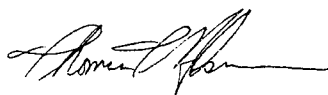
Jim Aschwanden, Executive Director  
Agriculture Teachers Association of  
California



Jot Condie, President & CEO  
California Restaurant Association



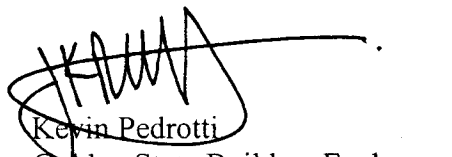
Chris Walker  
California Industrial & Technology  
Education Association




Thomas T. Holsman, CEO  
Associated General Contractors of  
California



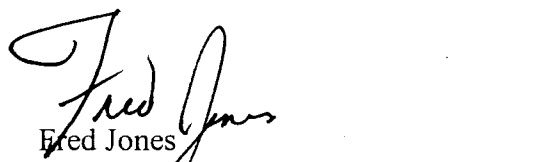
Cyndi Marshall  
California Association of Sheet Metal &  
Air Conditioning  
Contractors, National Association



Kevin Pedrotti  
Golden State Builders Exchange



Bruce Robeck,  
California Coalition for Construction in the  
Classroom



Fred Jones  
Home Economic Teachers Association  
Of California



Marty Keller, Executive Director  
Automotive Repair Coalition



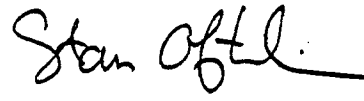
David Goodreau, Chairman of the Board  
Small Manufacturers Association of  
California



Bob Barkhouse, President  
California Automotive Teachers



Angie Roddan, Education Manager  
California Landscape Contractors  
Association



Stan Oftelie, President and CEO  
Orange County Business Council

cc: Mr. Bill Hauck, Co-Chair, California Performance Review Commission  
Ms. Joanne Kozberg, Co-Chair, California Performance Review Commission  
Honorable Members, California Performance Review Commission  
The Honorable Richard Riordan, Secretary  
Governor's Office of the Secretary for Education  
The Honorable Victoria Bradshaw, Secretary  
California Labor & Workforce Development Agency  
The Honorable Sunne Wright McPeak, Secretary  
California Business, Transportation & Housing Agency