



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
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May 24, 2007

The Honorable Assemblymember Soto
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0061

RE: Support for AB 57

Dear Assemblymember Soto:

I am writing on behalf of the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC) to express our strong support for AB 57, which would eliminate the sunset date for the Safe Routes to School (SR2S) program. A recent Caltrans study of representative projects randomly selected throughout the state showed a significant increase in pedestrian and bicycle use in areas where SR2S projects were implemented. Based on the success of California's measure this program was included in SAFETEA-LU appropriating \$612 million over 5 years to fund states SR2S programs.

The Safe Routes to Schools Program has helped improve safety for school children in several areas of Santa Cruz County; however there is much more work to be done. Children are heavily dependent on travel via cars when faced with unsafe walking and biking routes to school. Thirty years ago, the sight of children walking and biking was common – 66 percent of all children did so. Now, however, less than 15 percent of all trips to and from school are by car or bus. The need to provide safe bicycle and pedestrian facilities for students is accentuated by the alarming child obesity and asthma rates.

Your leadership on this issue is invaluable, and will go a long way towards providing a more powerful voice to the youth most affected by California's growing transportation crisis.

We thank you again for your authorship, and continued support of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

George Dondero
Executive Director
Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

Cc: SCCTRC Board

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