POLITICO ALERT

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[**NECA Endorses School Facilities Bond Act of 2016**](http://www.californiansforqualityschools.com/state-building-and-construction-trades-council-of-california-endorses-school-facilities-bond-act-of-2016/)

The California Chapters of the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA)  has endorsed the Kindergarten Through Community College Public Education Facilities Bond Act of 2016. The measure, a $9 billion state school facilities bond to adequately fund school construction and modernization projects throughout the state, will appear on the November 2016 ballot.

California has a multi-billion dollar backlog in school construction projects that have applied for and are waiting on state matching funds. This bond will help ease school over-crowding and bring hundreds of schools up to the state’s most basic health and safety requirements. This is a very important issue to NECA as the state’s school and community college facilities are a fundamental component of our infrastructure and economy.

The initiative language retains the successful current funding partnership between the state and local entities, where eligible school districts raise local dollars and then apply for matching state funds to help maximize taxpayer investment. This program – the School Facility Program – was signed into law in 1998. If the measure passes, the program will continue and communities will have the ability to upgrade aging facilities to meet current health and safety standards and educational needs, and to build new facilities. It will also allow communities to invest in community colleges facilities that support job-training programs. Research demonstrates that infrastructure investment – like school construction – will yield economic benefits as well, with studies showing that 13,000 jobs are created for every $1 billion of infrastructure investment.

The last statewide school facilities bond was passed by California voters in 2006. The state’s fund to provide matching dollars to school districts that have already raised local funds for school construction projects has been depleted, leaving a backlog of $2 billion in K-12 project applications and almost $500 million in approved community college projects, with billions more in identified need. With estimates placing K-12 school construction funding needs for the next decade at more than $20 billion, the $9 billion bond will be a significant step forward to address the state’s school construction needs.

It’s anticipated that the $9 billion state bond with local matching funds will result in $7.5 billion in new construction, $5.75 billion in modernization, $1 billion for charter school construction and $1 billion for vocational education. This equates to total state and local spending of $17.25 billion.