



Assembly Member **SANDRÉ SWANSON**

News Release

**For Immediate Release:**

April 30, 2009

**Contact:** Douglas MacLean

(916) 319-2016

## Swanson's Bill To Bring Additional Funds To Oakland Schools Advances

**(Sacramento)** – Yesterday, the Assembly Appropriations Committee passed a bill that would help school districts in state receivership pay their loan while continuing to provide quality education programs. AB 980, authored by Assemblymember Sandré R. Swanson (D-Oakland), passed the committee on a 10-5 vote.

“This is about fairness. When a district is recovering from financial crisis, it is only right that all parts of the district pay their fair share to pay off any state loan. State Superintendent of Instruction Jack O’Connell saw fit to transfer monies from Oakland’s funds to charter schools. It is only right that charter schools in the district pay their fair share of the state loan,” Assemblymember Swanson contended.

Currently, only traditional public schools in districts in state receivership are responsible for repayment of state loans. Under the provisions of the bill, both charter and traditional schools would be charged a prorated amount, based on the number of students enrolled at the school. The formula is based on a program at the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD), which has signed contracts with approximately one-third of its charter schools to help share responsibility for the loan repayment.

Some charter schools currently pay a share of the loan. Under the bill, these charters would actually save money, Assemblymember Swanson noted. Estimates vary, but the district would gain an additional \$500,000 annually from charters not currently contributing.

OUSD Board President Alice Spearman testified at yesterday’s hearing. “This bill will help evenly distribute the burden of debt repayment across all schools in our district. I consider this matter one of basic fairness,” she stated.

“This bill makes it possible to share the burden so that students are not penalized for attending the wrong school. It also ensures that the fiscal recovery of these districts is not further jeopardized, and protects the taxpayers’ investment,” Assemblymember Swanson concluded.

###

**Capitol:** State Capitol - P.O. Box 942849 - Sacramento, CA 94249-0016 - **Tel:** (916) 319-2016 - **Fax:** (916) 319-2116  
**District:** 1515 Clay Street, Suite 2204 - Oakland, CA 94612 - **Tel:** (510) 286-1670 - **Fax:** (510) 286-1888