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INITIATIVE COORDINATOR
ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE

Attention: Ms. Anabel Renteria
Initiative Coordinator

Dear Attorney General Bonta:

Pursuant to Elections Code Section 9005, we have reviewed the proposed statutory initiative regarding environmental sustainability education in schools (A.G. File No. 25-0001).

Background

State Has Adopted Public School Science Standards. The state has adopted academic content standards that describe what students are expected to know by the end of each grade in each subject. The state adopted the current science standards in 2013. The standards cover a broad range of science concepts in each grade level, including the use of natural resources, the impact of human activity on the environment, and global climate change.

Proposal

Establishes Environmental Education Requirements for All Students. This measure requires public schools to provide each student with 30 hours of education on environmental sustainability and sustainable best practices every two years. Topics may focus on scientific or skills-based knowledge related to environmental sustainability practices. The training must expand on the level of knowledge students previously had and incorporate hands-on learning.

Fiscal Effects

Costs Related to Instructional Materials and Lesson Plans. The measure would increase costs for public schools to the degree they purchase new instructional materials and adjust lesson plans. For example, schools might need to purchase additional materials to incorporate hands-on learning into their instruction, such as more equipment for experiments and outdoor learning activities. Schools might also face costs associated with training staff on updated science lessons that ensure they cover 30 hours of environmental sustainability every two years. As California's science standards currently include topics covering environmental sustainability in each grade level, the required lesson changes likely would be minor. The total cost of required staff training and new classroom materials likely would not exceed the low tens of millions of dollars in the

initial years and then decline over time. Costs for individual schools would vary depending on the degree to which a school already incorporates the required sustainability topics.

Summary of Fiscal Effects. This measure would have the following fiscal effect:

- Costs likely not exceeding the low tens of millions of dollars during initial implementation, then declining over time, for public schools to purchase materials and make adjustment to their science lessons. The costs would vary based on the degree to which schools already cover environmental sustainability topics and provide hands-on learning activities.

Sincerely,



Gabriel Petek
Legislative Analyst



Joe Stephenshaw
Director of Finance