



April 19, 2018

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The Honorable William Brough
Member, California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 3141
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Assembly Bill 2508 (Brough) – Property tax bills: debt and financial data of the county.
Oppose – As Amended April 17, 2018
Hearing Date: April 25, 2018 – Assembly Local Government Committee**

Dear Assembly Member Brough:

On behalf of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC), I write in respectful opposition to your Assembly Bill 2508, related to property tax bill information. We appreciate the recent amendments that would prevent an unnecessary drain on county resources by ensuring an adequate funding allocation is provided before this requirement would take effect. However, the additional information provided on the property tax bill could create further confusion and mislead property owners in their effort to understand local government finances.

Specifically, AB 2508 would require counties to provide on the property tax bill debt and financial data of the county including the total debt, the annual operating expenses, the total unfunded pension liability, payments made for retirement pensions earned in the current fiscal year, the total unfunded liability for health care benefits for retirees, payments made for health care benefits for retirees earned in the current fiscal year and the total debt for pension obligation. This new requirement is not only redundant with current local agency reporting requirements but it also confuses the purpose of the tax bill and provides an incomplete picture of local government finances.

Under current law, cities, counties and special districts are required to complete annual Financial Transaction Reports (FTR) and debt activity to the State Controller's Office and the State Treasurer's Office, respectively. This information is made available on a public websites maintained by the state offices, which provide background information and glossaries to explain components of local agency finances. It also provides the public with the ability to compare certain components of local finances and debt across multiple cities, counties and special district jurisdictions. We believe these resources are sufficient to help ensure transparency and promote understanding of local government finances.

AB 2508 fails to recognize that county tax bills contain information for cities, special districts and schools. While the county provides administrative services, all local agencies benefit from the revenue collected. We believe providing only county debt and financial data on the tax bill would mislead taxpayers into thinking the revenue collected is only for county purposes. It paints an incomplete picture of the local agencies providing infrastructure and services to that property.

Finally, we believe if additional supplemental information should be provided to the taxpayer it should be done through a different method as to not confuse or distract the from the intended purpose of the tax bill – to collect tax payments for current and/or delinquent charges. For the aforementioned reasons, CSAC respectfully opposes AB 2508. If you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 650-8133.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Dorothy Johnson'.

Dorothy Johnson
Legislative Representative