

CITY OF OAKLAND



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Council President Pro Tempore Sheng Thao
DISTRICT 4

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Date: 2/15/22
To: The Oakland City Council and Members of the Public
From: Council President Pro Tempore Sheng Thao, District 4
Re: Support for Senate Bill 878

Members of the Oakland City Council and the Public,

This document serves to add context to my resolution endorsing Senate Bill 878 (Skinner).

Currently, many schoolchildren in California have difficulties getting to and from school. Research conducted by the California Department of Education from 2017-2019 showed that lack of transportation to and from school was one of the most common reasons students in California missed school, with black students having a much higher rate of unexcused absences from school than their white peers.

Other research has shown that students who were guaranteed transportation to and from school graduated more frequently than students who were not guaranteed transportation. We know that a robust educational system is the bedrock of a healthy democracy. Education empowers community members, consumers, citizens, and voters to make informed decisions and more readily advocate for their own best interests.

Requiring children and families to navigate their own transportation to and from school represents a potential barrier to education, especially for low-income families or families with two working parents.

State Senator Nancy Skinner has introduced Senate Bill 878, which would establish a state-funded program to ensure that every TK-12 public school student would have guaranteed transportation to and from school. I believe this would shrink the gap in graduation and produce a positive result on future generations of Californians. I hope you join me in supporting this bill.

Sincerely,



Council President Pro Tempore Sheng Thao