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Statewide Community Leaders Kick off Campaign to Defeat Proposition 38

Draper School Voucher Initiative Will Hurt California Kids and Local Public Schools; Coalition of ‘Everyone But Tim Draper’ Unveiled At News Conferences Across the State

Sacramento – A broad coalition of parents, educators, elected officials, business leaders and ethnic community leaders today kicked off the No on Prop 38 campaign in cities throughout California calling Prop 38 – the school voucher initiative – a risky proposal that will hurt our local public schools. Coalition press conferences were held today in Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Jose, Sacramento, and San Diego. (The Fresno coalition will kick off its press conference on Friday, Sept. 8).

“The Draper Initiative devastates public education,” said Lieutenant Governor Cruz Bustamante. “It’s a step in the wrong direction and it will undermine our recent school reforms.”

“He truly is a wolf in sheep’s clothing,” California NAACP Executive Director Alice Huffman said of Tim Draper, the sponsor or Prop 38. “How dare he present himself to our community as a friend – his interest is not in bettering education for our children.”

"Just when we thought Pete Wilson was gone, here comes his friend Tim Draper. The Latino community will not be fooled. Prop. 38 will hurt our children and our schools,” said Elsa Lopez, Executive Director Madres del Este de Los Angeles.

Members of the business community were active participants at the No on Prop 38 events throughout the state. “This measure would provide for no accountability,” said Bill Hauck, President of California Business Roundtable, a leading opponent of Prop 38.

At the San Francisco conference, Mayor Willie Brown was one of several community leaders to speak out against Prop 38. “Improving our educational system is a mandate that we must fulfill for the future of our kids,” said Brown. “That’s why I’m asking you to vote No on 38 – the measure has no accountability, is fiscally irresponsible, and drains public schools of much-needed resources.”

In San Jose, Mayor Ron Gonzales added to the chorus of voices against the Draper Initiative. “Most California children depend on good public schools for their education,” Gonzalez commented. “Taking money away from our schools is not the answer.”

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Prop 38 is authored by Silicon Valley billionaire Tim Draper, who has vowed to spend $40 million to pass his initiative. Prop 38 would use taxpayer funds to provide $4000 vouchers to private and religious schools not accountable to parents or taxpayers.

The No on Prop 38 coalition includes Hermandad Mexicana Nacional, California Business for Education Excellence, AARP, League of Women Voters, Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association, and CA Firefighters. As part of the campaign kick-off, a number of volunteer organizing activities also started across the state this week.

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