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Westly Report Shows State Owes \$2 Billion to Locals

Westly Pushing Bill to Help Schools, First Responders

SACRAMENTO – Controller Steve Westly today issued a report revealing the state owes more than \$2 billion to local government agencies for emergency, educational and other services.

“Sacramento has to stop covering its budget mess with the money it owes emergency services and our schools,” Westly said. “We can’t fix the state’s finances without honest budgeting.”

The Controller’s State Mandates Report shows the state owes schools \$6 million for conducting criminal background checks on new employees, owes local governments \$27 million for preparing schools for emergencies and natural disasters, and owes programs to aid disabled students \$320 million.

State Funds Owed:

Local governments:	\$1,132,707,197
School Districts:	\$ 973,516,060
Community Colleges:	\$ 72,854,080
Total:	\$ 2,179,077,337

If and when the state makes good on paying the state mandates, it would also have to pay accrued interest that would reach into the hundreds of millions of dollars.

Westly recently proposed legislation that would repay public safety mandates within three years and allow agencies to bond against the money they are owed so they can be paid immediately.

“Our first responders could use the \$500 million they’re owed for fire trucks, bulletproof vests and bioterrorism training. If we want our schools and emergency departments to deliver at 100 percent, then we need to fund them 100 percent,” Westly said.

A detailed state mandate deficiency report is available at
<http://www.sco.ca.gov/ard/local/locrim/reports/ab3000yr2005.pdf>

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