

**UTAH STUDENTS AT RISK, NEED FOR RAPID VISUAL SCREENING SEISMIC SURVEY**

WHEREAS, Utah faces a serious risk of a major earthquake of a magnitude -7 rupture of the Salt Lake City segment of the Wasatch fault that could kill 2,300 to 2,900 people, injure 30,000 to 40,00 more and cause damage and other losses totaling \$37 billion;<sup>1,2</sup> and

WHEREAS: The Utah Seismic Safety Commission and the Structural Engineers Association of Utah used a method known as “rapid visual screening” to make a preliminary assessment of earthquake safety of a sampling of 128 school buildings out of more than 1,000 schools in the state of Utah;<sup>2</sup> and

WHEREAS: Of the 128 public and charter school buildings screened using these so-called “sidewalk surveys,” 51 were determined to have an acceptable level of seismic safety, but 77 school buildings – or 60 percent – were found to require a more detailed seismic evaluation to determine if they can with-stand strong earthquakes or instead need to be retrofitted or replaced;<sup>2</sup> and

WHEREAS: There is a great disparity in the seismic safety of Utah’s schools because of lack of resources and programs which uniformly address improvements to school buildings either through replacement or seismic upgrades;<sup>1,2</sup> now therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Utah PTA urge the Legislature to adequately fund, from other than the General Education Fund, to complete a “rapid visual screening of all school buildings built before 1974; and be it further

Resolved, That the Utah PTA urge the State Office of Education create a Public School Seismic Safety Committee to determine the threshold score for evaluations and rank seismic vulnerability to allow proper importance to be placed on the most needful buildings; and be it further

Resolved, That the Utah PTA urge the State Office of Education to work with the school districts and charter schools to provide a working plan for those schools that are at most risk to the students, teachers and administrators.

Documentation:

<sup>1</sup>Newton, Lawrence, “Facilities Seismic Safety in Public Schools: A 10 Year Mitigation Plan,” Utah State Office of Education, May 15, 2006.

<http://ussc.utah.gov/publications/newton%20school%20survey%202006.pdf>

<sup>2</sup>Lee J. Siegel, “Utah Students At Risk The Earthquake Hazards of School Buildings, A Preliminary Survey by the Utah Seismic Safety Commission and Structural Engineers Association of Utah,” Funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, February 2011.

[http://ussc.utah.gov/publications/Utah\\_Students\\_at\\_Risk.pdf](http://ussc.utah.gov/publications/Utah_Students_at_Risk.pdf)

