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Declaration of Karla Henriquez

I, Karla Henriquez, hereby declare:

- 1. I make this declaration based on my own personal knowledge and if called to testify I could and would do so competently as follows:
 - 2. I am 18 years old. I am a senior at Fremont High School in Los Angeles.
- 3. My education and career planning class during my senior year did not have a permanent teacher. We had a total of three substitute teachers throughout the semester. The first substitute only showed us movies. With the second substitute, we made posters about careers. For the second semester of my tenth grade U.S. History class we also didn't have a permanent teacher and instead had like three substitutes. The first substitute stayed there for like half of the semester. All he would do was joke around. He would tell the students jokes, and the students would tell him jokes, so all we did was talk for the whole class. The second substitute was really strict, but he did not teach us. He would just give us the assignments but not explain anything. All he did was tell us what to do, and then gave us bad grades. I got a D, and so I later had to take the class over at night school. Why should I get a D? It's unfair, it's not our fault that we don't have a permanent teacher and the substitutes don't take the class seriously. I did not take it again until the first semester of the 12th grade because, before this year, everyone told me a D was a passing grade and since a D was passing I did not need to take it again. Even my ninth grade drama teacher said that a D was passing. It was not until I learned through an after-school program I go to at the Community Coalition about the requirements for college that I decided to take the class again because it was necessary for college.
- 4. We don't have enough classrooms for all the classes at Fremont. When I took education and career planning, we started the semester in one classroom but midway through our semester another track came back on track and needed the classroom. My class had to move out of the room and move into a classroom we shared with the sewing class at the same time. It was really noisy with the sewing machines and crowded because we had two classes in one classroom.
 - 5. For my physical sciences class during my eleventh grade we did not do any labs

 and we did not have enough books. During the first semester we had science in the wood shop room, so there was no lab space. Mostly everyone shared books; I shared one book with two friends. We could not take the books home because there were not enough books. The science books were out of date, some had missing pages, and some had the covers torn off.

- 6. I saw cockroaches in class during my physical sciences class.
- 7. For my English class this year we did not have any books at all. All we did was watch movies like *The Matrix* and write reports on the movies. The teacher reads us kindergarten-level books everyday, like this bunny book that had only three words on each page. I asked him why he reads these types of books because I was confused about this, and he replied because he just wanted to. To graduate from high school we have to do a portfolio, which contains our resume and autobiography, among other things. We told him about this, but he said he didn't feel like doing it. Instead, we watched movies and did reports on them.
- 8. There is also a big problem with the bathrooms. There are a bunch of bathrooms, including one on every floor and another by drama class, but only one bathroom for girls is ever open, and even that one is sometimes locked. This one bathroom is supposed to be for all the girls at the school. Of the stalls that do have doors, some of the stall doors don't have a lock so we put toilet paper to stuff the gap. Some of the stalls don't have doors. And sometimes there is no paper.
- 9. We just got a college counselor at Fremont this year, so I didn't have one for my freshman to junior years. From my freshman to junior years I only saw my regular class counselor once a year. The counselor would call you in to give you your classes and your grades, and just say, these are your classes. For my first semester of my freshman year I did not get a program card with my classes. So for the first week I did not have any classes. All of us who did not get program cards had to get in line for that week to wait until we could get classes. The counselor finally gave me a schedule with standard classes. I didn't have a choice in what classes I received. I get really mad because in the ninth grade they gave me integrated math, even though I could've gone straight into algebra. If they would have put me into algebra, which was my real level, I would've been able to have gone into calculus or trigonometry. But instead, I was only

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able to go up to algebra 2, and I know that in college they expect more than that from students. Also, I was supposed to take education & career planning in ninth grade, which is a required class, but they didn't ever give me that class. I didn't take it until the 12th grade when my counselor gave it to me, so I sat in that class with all freshman.

10. The buildings and the bathrooms are very important, but the education is more important. I'm really concerned about the education we receive. To me, it is most important to be informed about college, about the classes we need to graduate, and to be called in by counselors so they can tell us what we need. I did not even know of the A-G requirements that are necessary for the University of California system. I never heard of them because no one at school told me about them. The first time I learned about the A-G requirements was through a youth program I belong to at the Community Coalition. It makes me mad because this only happens to us because of the community we live in. In other communities, they have more college prep and advanced placement classes, SAT preparation classes, and other things we don't have. Kids in other communities know about college, financial aid, and what they have to do. I'm mad because I could've gone to a U.C. school, but the highest goal the school has for us is to go to a community college, if that. The goal is not for us to reach for our best. My college counselor told me to got to Santa Monica Community College. By then, I already knew about universities. I should be wanting to go to a U.C., and not just what they think about us. The education is not high enough for us to be prepared to go to college. I'm going to a Cal State university, and I'm scared sometimes about going to college because at Fremont they don't prepare us. I question whether I'm smart enough to go to college, whether they taught me cnough.

I declare under penalty of perjury of the laws of the State of California and the United States that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed this 15 day of June, 2001 in Los Angeles, California.

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Zela - Parrique