Over the weekend, Governor Jerry Brown vetoed SB 131, a bill that we have worked very hard to defeat. The bill had lots of problems, not least of which was that it discriminated against families that utilized public institutions, since it would have only subjected private institutions to additional liability for ancient abuse claims.

Our legislative director, Dennis Seaton, had an excellent meeting with Gov. Brown’s staff, and there is no question our collective voice was heard, as the veto message reflects some of our major message points.

I would like to personally express my appreciation for Governor Brown and his staff. Whatever anyone thinks of his politics, Brown is a seasoned elected official, and he sweats the details. It would have been easy for him to dismiss criticism of this bill, and sign the bill as one that punishes institutions where child abuse took place. But instead, he and his staff examined the details of how this bill worked, and found it to be fundamentally unfair.

We sent out numerous emails about this bill, and we know that many sent letters and made phone calls, at various stages of the legislative process. We want to thank all of you who cared enough to speak up. We urge you to take courage from this victory, and continue speaking up and participating in the future. Some of you may wish to join us for our annual lobby day, next year on May 5, 2014. If so, let Natalie Eva know: neva@churchstate.org.

It is also important to keep in perspective the efforts our church has made to protect children. The Seventh-day Adventist church nationwide is a leader in implementing procedures to protect children. Our hearts go out to those who have suffered and as a church organization we remain committed to protecting children now and in the future. I’m sure that is equally true for your own church and school boards and administrators, as it is for all of us at different levels of church administration.

So, in short: THANK YOU