

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1159

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, FEBRUARY 27, 1992

Brief Description: Requiring the adoption of a policy prohibiting corporal punishment in schools.

SPONSORS: Representatives Cole, Leonard, Roland, Jacobsen, Rust, Prentice, Ebersole, Phillips, Holland, Scott, R. Fisher, Fraser, Jones, Pruitt, Franklin, Brekke, Sprenkle, R. King, Wood, Basich, Wang, Spanel, Belcher, H. Myers, Appelwick, Orr, Beck, Braddock, Horn, Dellwo, R. Johnson, Morris, Nelson, Miller, Wineberry and Anderson.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Bailey, Chairman; Murray, Pelz, Rinehart, A. Smith, and Talmadge.

Minority Report: Do not pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Metcalf and Oke.

Staff: Leslie Goldstein (786-7424)

Hearing Dates: March 25, 1991; March 27, 1991; February 26, 1992; February 27, 1992

BACKGROUND:

Corporal punishment in the schools has been a frequently debated issue in recent years. According to a 1989 study by the National PTA, corporal punishment in the schools has been expressly prohibited in the District of Columbia and 19 states including Alaska, California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, and Wisconsin. As of 1989, the other 31 states did not have such legislation.

SUMMARY:

By December 1, 1991, the State Board of Education is required to adopt a policy prohibiting the use of corporal punishment in the schools. The policy shall be implemented by school districts by September 1, 1992.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED SENATE AMENDMENT:

The dates are changed requiring the state board to take action as of December 1, 1992, and school districts to implement the policy by September 1, 1993.

TESTIMONY FOR:

Corporal punishment hurts children's self esteem and their ability to learn. Hitting is not permitted in the workplace or state institutions; it should not be permitted in schools. On this issue the need to protect children outweighs the need to protect local control.

TESTIMONY AGAINST:

Corporal punishment, when used properly and with discretion, helps keep order and discipline in the schools.

TESTIFIED: PRO: Representative Grace Cole, prime sponsor; Marcia Holland, Washington State Parent Teachers Association; Deborah Hall, American Academy of Pediatrics; Dorothy Roberts, League of Women Voters; CON: Helen Johnson, personal rights advocate