

SENATE BILL REPORT

HJR 4234

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, FEBRUARY 26, 1992

**Brief Description:** Changing the number of electors necessary to approve school levy measures.

**SPONSORS:** Representatives G. Cole, Brough, Peery, Jacobsen, Brumsickle, Winsley, Dorn, Franklin, Orr, J. Kohl, Pruitt, Sheldon, Spanel, O'Brien, Brekke, Nelson and Anderson

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Bailey, Chairman; Erwin, Vice Chairman; Anderson, Murray, Pelz, Rinehart, and Talmadge.

**Staff:** Mich'l Prentice Needham (786-7439)

**Hearing Dates:** February 26, 1992

**BACKGROUND:**

Under the State Constitution a proposal to levy an additional tax or general obligation bond can be validated by a 60 percent yes vote when the total number of votes cast is equal to at least 40 percent of the votes cast in the preceding general election.

In recent years, school districts have had increasing difficulty passing special bond levies and the bond failure rate has dramatically increased. At the same time, the number of voters needed to validate bond levies increased with the significant voter turnout in the last November general election.

**SUMMARY:**

Article VII, Section 2 of the Constitution is amended to allow public school districts to pass an excess levy or general obligation bond if three-fifths of those voting approve the measure. The 40 percent voter turnout requirement no longer applies to school district elections.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** requested January 22, 1992

**TESTIMONY FOR:**

Eliminating the 40 percent turnout requirement will help school districts pass their levies and will create a more democratic process.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:** None

**TESTIFIED:** PRO: Kathryn Haigh; John Kvamme, Tacoma Public Schools and Washington Association of School Administrators; Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Director's Association