

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5528

AS PASSED SENATE, MARCH 18, 1991

Brief Description: Allowing local literacy programs for children.

SPONSORS: Senators Rinehart, Bailey, Murray and Erwin.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

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

Staff: Leslie Goldstein (786-7424)

Hearing Dates: March 5, 1991; March 6, 1991

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

BACKGROUND:

In 1990 the Legislature created the Learn-in Libraries program. The pilot program was designed to provide grants to libraries for after school programs to school-age children to increase literacy, improve reading skills, and provide homework assistance. The program is scheduled to expire June 30, 1991. Fifty thousand dollars was appropriated. Grants were provided to Spokane Public Library and the Milton Memorial Library. In Spokane, attendance for one library increased 477 percent from a total of 89 children to 514 in the first month. Both communities have found the program to be very successful.

SUMMARY:

The Learn-in Libraries program is extended. The State Library Commission is authorized to provide grants to local libraries to develop and implement learn-in-library programs that provide after school and vacation programs for children.

The State Library Commission is also authorized to provide grants to libraries to develop innovative programs for children throughout the year. Cooperation with school districts is encouraged.

The purpose of both types of grants is to increase literacy, encourage reading, promote reading readiness, and improve reading and other learning skills. Use of older adult volunteers and other community volunteer resources is encouraged.

The expiration date is repealed.

A report to the Legislature is required by December 1, 1991.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available

TESTIMONY FOR:

This program is highly effective and has provided literacy opportunities for children unserved by other programs. Community groups have worked together to better use available resources.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Senator Nita Rinehart (pro); Daniel Walters, Spokane Public Library (pro)

HOUSE AMENDMENT(S):

An incorrect section reference is corrected to repeal the expiration date.