

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2294

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As Reported By House Committee On:  
Education

**Title:** An act relating to allowing two-year levies for the acquisition of motor vehicles for student transportation.

**Brief Description:** Allowing two-year levies for the acquisition of motor vehicles for student transportation.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Patterson, G. Fisher, Dorn, Brough, Karahalios, Cothorn, Campbell, Shin, Basich, Springer, B. Thomas, Holm and J. Kohl.

**Brief History:**

Reported by House Committee on:  
Education, January 25, 1994, DPS.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 18 members: Representatives Dorn, Chair; Cothorn, Vice Chair; Brough, Ranking Minority Member; B. Thomas, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Brumsickle; Carlson; G. Cole; Eide; G. Fisher; Hansen; Holm; Jones; Karahalios; J. Kohl; Patterson; Pruitt; Roland; and L. Thomas.

**Staff:** Robert Butts (786-7111).

**Background:**

**Length of Levies**

The Washington State Constitution places a number of restrictions on the use of special property tax levies by local governments. For most local governments, special levies may only raise taxes for one year.

However, the **Constitution** gives school districts two exceptions:

(1) propositions for the "support of the common schools" may levy a tax for a two-year period; and

(2) propositions "to support the construction, modernization, or remodelling of school facilities" may levy taxes for a period of up to six years.

When implementing the two-year levy provision of the Constitution, state statutes do not refer to the "support of common schools" but to "maintenance and operation support." The phrase "maintenance and operation support" has been interpreted to not include the purchase of school buses. Under this interpretation, school districts may only have one-year levies for the purchase of school buses.

**Levy Lid**

State law places a limit, or "lid", on the amount of funds school districts may raise for maintenance and operation through special property tax levies. The levy limit varies among districts depending on the district's maximum levy rate and the amount of specified state and federal revenues received by the district.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** State law is amended to specifically allow two-year levies for the purchase of school buses. In addition, these transportation levies are specifically excluded from the levy lid.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** Technical changes were adopted.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date of Substitute Bill:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** Would you buy a car in a year? We can buy computers over a six-year period, but we must buy buses all at one time. This bill will allow school districts to spread the cost of purchasing buses over two-years, which will mean the taxpayers will not have large single-year transportation levies. If passed, this measure will reduce the number of unsafe buses carrying our children.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Witnesses:** Representative Julia Patterson (sponsor); Lynn McKinnon, Public School Employees Association (supports); Mary Carr, Highline School District (supports); and Rita Creighton, Highline Citizens for Schools (supports).