

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 2294

As Passed House
February 12, 1994

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: By House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by 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;
Revenue, February 8, 1994, DPS(ED);
Passed House, February 12, 1994, 93-1.

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).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON REVENUE

Majority Report: The substitute bill by Committee on Education be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 14 members: Representatives G. Fisher, Chair; Holm, Vice Chair; Foreman, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson; Brown; Caver; Cothorn; Leonard; Romero; Rust; Talcott; Thibaudeau; Van Luven and Wang.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Fuhrman, Assistant Ranking Minority Member.

Staff: Rick Peterson (786-7150).

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 remodeling 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 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.

Fiscal Note: Requested February 10, 1994.

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

Testimony For: (Education) 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.

(Revenue) None.

Testimony Against: (Education) None.

(Revenue) None.

Witnesses: (Education) 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).

(Revenue) None.