

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1064

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, MARCH 22, 1993

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

SPONSORS: House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives G. Cole, Van Luven, G. Fisher, Cothorn, Dorn, Holm, Leonard, Jones, Rust, R. Fisher, Jacobsen, King, Dellwo, Scott, Morris, Wang, Thibaudeau, Romero, Valle, Pruitt, Appelwick, Basich, J. Kohl, Anderson, Ogden, H. Myers, Wineberry, Riley, Brown, Long, Orr, Shin, Horn, Forner, Eide, Wolfe, Johanson, Kessler and Veloria)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Pelz, Chairman; McAuliffe, Vice Chairman; Gaspard, Moyer, M. Rasmussen, Rinehart, Skratek, and Winsley.

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7439)

Hearing Dates: March 19, 1993; March 22, 1993

BACKGROUND:

A school district is authorized, under WAC 180-40-235, to use corporal punishment to discipline children if the punishment is imposed outside the view of other students by an authorized employee while witnessed by another employee. No cruel or unusual form of corporal punishment is allowed. Only reasonable and moderate force may be used, and no form of corporal punishment may be inflicted upon a student's head. The student's parents or guardians shall be notified of each use of corporal punishment. Upon request, the school district shall provide the parents or guardians with a written explanation of the reason(s) for the corporal punishment and the name of the witness.

According to the national PTA, 22 states prohibit the use of corporal punishment in disciplining students.

SUMMARY:

Corporal punishment in the common schools is prohibited.

The State Board of Education, in consultation with office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, must adopt a policy by February 1, 1994, prohibiting the use of corporal

punishment in common schools. The policy is to take effect September 1, 1994 in all school districts.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: none requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

Corporal punishment is an ineffective method of discipline because it lowers self esteem, endorses violence, and therefore inhibits learning. It is used disproportionately on minorities, boys, and children with learning disabilities. Other state institutions (foster homes, day care centers, and jails) prohibit the use of corporal punishment. Some children are abused at home and need to learn nonviolent ways of resolving conflicts. On this issue, the need to protect children outweighs the need to protect local control.

TESTIMONY AGAINST:

Corporal punishment and child abuse are not the same. Corporal punishment is a tool of God. It is an effective deterrent. It regulates character. Some children need to know that corporal punishment may be used.

TESTIFIED: PRO: Representative Grace Cole, original prime sponsor; Kip Tokuda, WA Council for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect; Angela Katirayi, Jimmie Black, Issac Ralston, Karina Beeler, students, Shoreline School District; Julie MacGreger, WA State Association of School Psychologists; Marcia Holland, WA State PTA; Susan Patrick, State Board of Education, SPI; Mary Murphy, League of Women Voters; Tom Nogler, Child Abuse Prevention Association; CON: Keith Easterly, President, Moses Lake School Board