

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2294

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, FEBRUARY 23, 1994

Brief Description: Allowing two-year levies for transportation vehicle funds.

SPONSORS: 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)

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON REVENUE

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Pelz, Chairman; McAuliffe, Vice Chairman; Gaspard, Hochstatter, McDonald, Moyer, Nelson, M. Rasmussen, Rinehart, Skratek and A. Smith.

Staff: Leslie Goldstein (786-7424)

Hearing Dates: February 21, 1994; February 23, 1994

BACKGROUND:

Length of Levies. The Washington State Constitution limits the use of special property tax levies by local governments. Most local governments may only raise taxes for one year through special tax levies.

However, the Constitution authorizes school districts to levy taxes for two year periods for the "support of the common schools." The Constitution also authorizes levies for two to six years "to support the construction, modernization, or remodelling of school facilities."

Under statute, districts are authorized to raise two-year levies for the maintenance and operation of a school district. Questions have been raised about whether or not maintenance and operation levies may be used to purchase school buses.

Levy Lid. State law places a limit, or "lid", on the amount of funds school districts may raise through maintenance and operation levies.

SUMMARY:

School districts are authorized to raise levies for two years for the purchase or major repairs of school buses. These

transportation levies are specifically excluded from the levy lid.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: requested

TESTIMONY FOR:

This legislation would allow school districts to spread the cost of purchasing buses over two years. The measure saves the expense of running frequent elections. Expensive equipment that lasts for up to 20 years should not need to be paid for in one year.

TESTIMONY AGAINST:

Local taxpayers should not need to pay for school buses. The state should pay for buses.

TESTIFIED: Rita Creighton, Highline School District Citizens' Levy Chair (pro); Cecil Peter Escalante (con); Don Carnahan, OSPI (pro)