

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1081

As Reported By House Committee On:
Education

Title: An act relating to tobacco policies for schools.

Brief Description: Strengthening school policies and prohibitions on the use of tobacco at schools.

Sponsors: Representatives Koster, Mulliken, Dunn, Mielke, Thompson, McMorris, Boldt, Sterk, Sherstad, Bush and Smith.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 1/23/97, 2/4/97 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Johnson, Chairman; Hickel, Vice Chairman; Cole, Ranking Minority Member; Keiser, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Linville; Quall; Smith; Sterk; Sump; Talcott and Veloria.

Staff: Joe Hauth (786-7111).

Background: Since 1991, the Legislature has required schools to forbid smoking and the use of other tobacco products on school property. School districts have the discretion to determine specific policies and sanctions. School districts frequently delineate tobacco policies in the form of a school policy handbook that is distributed to staff and students. Some school districts have smoking cessation programs, either singly or in conjunction with a general drug prevention program. For students caught smoking, many school districts apply a graduated– sanction approach. Typically, the school district issues the student a warning on the first offense. The school district may sanction repeated offenses by suspending the student or requiring the student to enroll in a program to stop tobacco use. School districts may allow an exemption on the tobacco prohibition for alternative schools within the school district.

Summary of Bill: School district tobacco policy requirements are clarified.

School districts must have a written tobacco policy that prohibits the use of tobacco products on school property. At a minimum, school districts must notify school personnel and students of the prohibition, post signs that prohibit the use of tobacco products, sanction school personnel and students who violate the policy, and require school district personnel to enforce the school district policy in addition to current public smoking prohibitions. The exemption for alternative schools is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: *The bill takes effect August 1, 1997.*

Testimony For: *Smoking on school grounds needs to be eliminated, as does all tobacco use by youth. It is good to specify the policies against tobacco use on school grounds, but how will these policies be enforced? The special needs of students in alternative programs should be considered.*

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Koster, prime sponsor; Dennis Biggs, American Cancer Society; Lincoln Weaver, Department of Health; Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Directors' Association; Jean Ameluxen, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (with concerns); and Nick Federici, American Lung Association.