

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

SSB 5118

Title: *An act relating to truancy petitions.*

Brief Description: *Changing school truancy petition provisions.*

Sponsors: *Senate Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Senators McAuliffe, Hargrove, Winsley, Long and Sheldon).*

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Meeting Date: *April 4, 1997.*

Staff Contact: *Joe Hauth (786-7111).*

Background: *As part of the 1995 "Becca Bill" (C 312 L 95), the Legislature enacted provisions that require schools to file a petition in juvenile court when a student accumulates at least five, and not more than seven unexcused absences in a month, or ten unexcused absences in a year. If the allegations in the truancy petition are established by a preponderance of the evidence, the court must assume jurisdiction to intervene for the remainder of the school year. The court may order the student to attend school, or be referred to a community truancy board. If the student fails to comply with the court's order, the court can impose a variety of sanctions, including detention, fines, or community service.*

Summary of Bill: *The length of the court's jurisdiction over a truant student is changed from the end of the school year to a period of time necessary to cause the student to return and remain in school. The list of actions that a court may order for a student subject to a truancy petition is expanded to include requiring the student submit to drug or alcohol testing.*

Appropriation: *None.*

Fiscal Note: *Requested on March 24, 1997.*

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