

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5649

As of February 12, 1997

Title: An act relating to school district employee benefits.

Brief Description: Revising provisions for school district employee benefits.

Sponsors: Senators Deccio, Wood and Strannigan.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/13/97.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Staff: Don Sloma (786-7319)

Background: School districts received about \$315 from the state to purchase employee benefits for each formula driven certificated, classified and administrative staff person in 1997. A July 1996 Attorney General's Opinion (AGO 1996 No. 9) said that all five basic benefits mentioned in statute must be offered by a school district before the district can agree to make employer contributions for an optional benefit.— Under current law, basic benefits are medical, dental, vision, group term life, and group long-term disability insurance coverage.

There is concern in some quarters about this Attorney General's Opinion because it is believed that many districts may now be offering optional benefits without offering all of the basic benefits required by law.

Summary of Bill: The definition of basic benefits used to define the use of state contributions to school district employer benefits is amended. Under the terms of the bill, the requirement that medical, dental, vision, group term life, **and** group long-term disability insurance coverage must **all** be present in basic benefits— is changed, so that any single benefit from this list qualifies as basic benefit.—

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 5, 1997.

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