

FINAL BILL REPORT

HB 1856

C 214 L 02

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Excusing student absences for state-recognized search and rescue activities.

Sponsors: By Representatives Morell, O'Brien, Talcott, Miloscia, Quall, Carrell, Rockefeller, Bush, Cox, Pflug, Pearson and Woods.

House Committee on Education
Senate Committee on Education

Background:

By law, with some exceptions, all children between the ages of 8 and 18 must attend school. Children who attend public school may be absent under limited conditions. The school district must excuse children who are physically or mentally unable to attend school. They must also excuse students who are absent at the parents' request for a purpose that has been agreed upon by the parents and school authorities. However, the school may not excuse absences that are deemed to have a seriously adverse effect on the student's educational progress.

The chief law enforcement officer of each city or county is responsible for local search and rescue operations. These operations are conducted under the auspices of state and local plans that have been adopted by the local county or city governing board. The operations are coordinated by the local director of emergency management. Under certain conditions, the state will compensate local jurisdictions for the costs associated with search and rescue activities.

Summary:

School districts are strongly encouraged to grant excused absences for up to five days each year to students participating in state-recognized search and rescue activities, as long as the students' parents and principals approve and the absences will not have a seriously adverse effect upon the students' educational progress.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 96 0
Senate 48 0 (Senate amended)
House 94 0 (House concurred)

Effective: June 13, 2002