

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5044

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Education, February 12, 2001

**Title:** An act relating to parental involvement in AIDS education.

**Brief Description:** Clarifying parental involvement in AIDS education.

**Sponsors:** Senator McCaslin.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Education: 2/5/01, 2/12/01 [DPS].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5044 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Eide, Vice Chair; Carlson, Finkbeiner, Hewitt, Kastama, Kohl-Welles, Prentice and Rasmussen.

**Staff:** Susan Mielke (786-7422)

**Background:** Under current law, instruction in the danger, spread, and prevention of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) must be taught to public school students at least once a year, beginning no later than the fifth grade. Each school district must have at least one presentation on the program's instructional materials so that parents may inspect the materials prior to the program being taught. At least one presentation of the materials must occur during the weekend and evening hours. Students may be excused from participation in the AIDS education program, if the parent has attended a presentation on the program's instructional materials, and objects in writing to the student's participation.

**Summary of Substitute Bill:** The requirement that parents annually attend a presentation on the AIDS education program's instructional materials prior to excusing a student from the program is changed to require parents to attend a presentation at least once in the prior three years before excusing a student from the program.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The substitute requires parents to attend a presentation on the AIDS education program materials at least once in the prior three years rather than annually to excuse their child from participation.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** Requiring parental attendance at a presentation of the AIDS curriculum before excusing your child is imposing a penalty on parents who have religious or other reasons for excusing the child from the program. We want to protect our children but we have a different way of doing it.

**Testimony Against:** From the public health perspective, this legislation will negatively impact AIDS prevention efforts. By requiring parents to view the curriculum, the parents become informed about the disease as well as the students. Parents should be able to excuse their child from the program but they should know what information they are denying their child. We should not relax the dissemination of AIDS information -- it's the only vaccine against AIDS.

**Testified:** PRO: Cliff Armstrong, Christian Science Churches; CON: Dr. Maxine Hayes, DOH; Judith Billings, Governor's Adv. Council on HIV/AIDS; Sherry Appleton, League of Women Voters.