

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 6389

As Passed Senate, February 15, 2002

Title: An act relating to the ability to place the United States flag on school district buses.

Brief Description: Authorizing placement of United States flags on school buses.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Senators Benton, McAuliffe, Hewitt, Swecker, Roach, Morton, Haugen, Long, Stevens, McCaslin, Johnson, Snyder, Honeyford, Sheahan, Rossi, Rasmussen, Eide, Hale and Oke).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Education: 1/24/02, 2/6/02 [DPS].

Passed Senate: 2/15/02, 45-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6389 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Eide, Vice Chair; Carlson, Finkbeiner, Hochstatter, Johnson, Kastama, Kohl-Welles, Rasmussen, Regala and Zarelli.

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7422)

Background: Currently, the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) has the authority to adopt and enforce rules governing the marking of school buses. Current rules specify the color and limit the signs and markings that may be on the exterior and interior of school buses.

Summary of Bill: The SPI must adopt rules which permit the display of the United States flag on all school buses. The rules must address the size and placement of the flag so that it does not interfere with the safe operation of the school bus.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Current SPI rules prohibit bus drivers from showing their loyalty to patriotism by flying a United States flag on their school bus antenna. This bill would give clear authority to SPI to permit the display of a flag on a school bus in a way that does not impair the vision of the driver. Display of the flag would be permissive“school districts would not be required to display the flag on a bus.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Senator Don Benton (prime sponsor); Jim Richardson (PSE).