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**Transportation Committee**

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**HB 1796**

**Brief Description:** Funding driver's education for low-income students.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Murray, Hankins, Dunshee, Anderson, Lantz, Eickmeyer, McIntire, Kagi, Conway, Kenney, Schual-Berke, Wood, Lovick, Santos and Edwards.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Provides funding for reduced-fee traffic safety education for low-income students through the assessment of a \$1 fee is assessed on all initial vehicle registrations and replacement licenses.
- Allows the Superintendent of Public Instruction to retain up to five percent of the fees collected under this bill to cover administrative expenses related to allocation of the funds.
- Directs the board of directors of school districts to set a reduced fee for traffic safety education for low-income students.

**Hearing Date:** 2/19/03

**Staff:** Jill Satran (786-7315).

**Background:**

Traffic safety education is provided to students in most school districts throughout the state. Historically, these programs have been funded through a mixture of funds provided by the state, the school district and individual students' families. Until recently, state funds have been available to support all such traffic safety education programs, and an additional amount has been available specifically to reduce these fees for low-income students. During the 2001-2003 biennium, state funding for these programs was eliminated. As a result approximately 35 school districts have reported dropping their traffic safety program due to lack of funding.

**Summary of Bill:**

This bill places a \$1 fee on all initial vehicle registrations and replacement license plates to

be placed in the public safety and education account (PSEA). The revenues generated from this fee are to be used only for lowering the cost to low-income students of traffic safety education programs accredited by school districts. The Superintendent of Public Instruction must determine the per-pupil reimbursement rate, and is allowed to deduct no more than five percent of the fees collected under this bill to cover the administrative costs associated with allocating these funds.

The board of directors of each school district or combination of school districts, currently required to set the traffic safety education fee, are also required by this bill to set a reduced fee for low-income students.

A "low income student" is a student who qualifies to receive school lunches on a reduced-cost or free basis.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 11, 2003.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect on July 1, 2003.