
HOUSE BILL 2995

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2016 Regular Session

By Representative Dunshee

1 AN ACT Relating to the four-year balanced budget process;
2 amending RCW 43.88.055; creating a new section; and declaring an
3 emergency.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The current four-year balanced budget
6 statute does not permit inclusion of general fund revenues deposited
7 into the budget stabilization account as resources to determine
8 whether the operating budget is balanced in the ensuing fiscal
9 biennium. Additionally, the legislature in chapter . . . (Engrossed
10 House Bill No. 2698), Laws of 2016 has declared its intent to
11 appropriate a portion of the general fund revenues regularly
12 transferred to the budget stabilization account for school
13 construction. It is the intent of the legislature to revise the four-
14 year balanced budget process to consider one-half of the regular
15 annual transfer to the budget stabilization account as available for
16 balancing purposes when determining balance in the ensuing fiscal
17 biennium.

18 **Sec. 2.** RCW 43.88.055 and 2012 1st sp.s. c 8 s 1 are each
19 amended to read as follows:

1 (1) The legislature must adopt a four-year balanced budget as
2 follows:

3 (a) Beginning in the 2013-2015 fiscal biennium, the legislature
4 shall enact a balanced omnibus operating appropriations bill that
5 leaves, in total, a positive ending fund balance in the general fund
6 and related funds.

7 (b) Beginning in the 2013-2015 fiscal biennium, the projected
8 maintenance level of the omnibus appropriations bill enacted by the
9 legislature shall not exceed the available fiscal resources for the
10 next ensuing fiscal biennium.

11 (2) For purposes of this section:

12 (a) "Available fiscal resources" means the beginning general fund
13 and related fund balances and any fiscal resources estimated for the
14 general fund and related funds, adjusted for enacted legislation, and
15 with forecasted revenues adjusted to the greater of (i) the official
16 general fund and related funds revenue forecast for the ensuing
17 biennium, or (ii) the official general fund and related funds
18 forecast for the second fiscal year of the current fiscal biennium,
19 increased by 4.5 percent for each fiscal year of the ensuing
20 biennium;

21 (b) "Projected maintenance level" means estimated appropriations
22 necessary to maintain the continuing costs of program and service
23 levels either funded in that appropriations bill or mandated by other
24 state or federal law, and one-half of the amount of any general fund
25 moneys projected to be transferred to the budget stabilization
26 account pursuant to Article VII, section 12**(b)(1)** of the state
27 Constitution, but does not include in the 2013-2015 and 2015-2017
28 fiscal biennia the costs related to the enhanced funding under the
29 new definition of basic education as established in chapter 548, Laws
30 of 2009, and affirmed by the decision in *Mathew McCleary et al., v.*
31 *The State of Washington*, 173 Wn.2d 477, 269 P.3d 227, (2012), from
32 which the short-term exclusion of these obligations is solely for the
33 purposes of calculating this estimate and does not in any way
34 indicate an intent to avoid full funding of these obligations;

35 (c) "Related funds," as used in this section, means the
36 Washington opportunity pathways account and the education legacy
37 trust account.

38 (3) Subsection (1)(a) and (b) of this section does not apply to
39 an appropriations bill that makes net reductions in general fund and

1 related funds appropriations and is enacted between July 1st and
2 February 15th of any fiscal year.

3 (4) Subsection (1)(b) of this section does not apply in a fiscal
4 biennium in which money is appropriated from the budget stabilization
5 account.

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act is necessary for the immediate
7 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of
8 the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes
9 effect immediately.

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