

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 5641

As Reported By House Committee On:

Education

Title: An act relating to public school students learning a second language.

Brief Description: Studying providing instruction in world languages in the common school system.

Sponsors: Senators McAuliffe, Fairley, Prince, Kohl, Fraser, Rasmussen and Prentice.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 3/16/95, 3/31/95 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Brumsickle, Chairman; Elliot, Vice Chairman; Cole, Ranking Minority Member; Dickerson; G. Fisher; Hatfield; Quall; Radcliff; Talcott; B. Thomas and Veloria.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Johnson, Vice Chairman; Clements; McMahan; Pelesky and Thompson.

Staff: Robert Butts (786-7111).

Background: In 1993, the Legislature established the Washington Task Force on International Education and Cultural Exchanges. The task force made recommendations on ways to improve and expand international education and cultural exchanges. The final recommendations were submitted in November 1994.

The task force recommended that students in the public schools learn a world language other than English, beginning in the elementary grades.

Summary of Bill: The Superintendent of Public Instruction, with the Commission on Student Learning, must conduct a study on instruction in world languages in the public schools by January 1, 1996. The study must identify possible funding incentives to encourage schools to offer instruction in world languages, develop plans that would enable schools to implement world language programs by the 1997-98

school year, and target languages used in the countries that are key trade partners of Washington State.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: The future of Washington State is world trade. Our students are not learning the languages of our trading partners. In other countries, students begin to learn languages in first grade. This legislation will analyze what is needed to increase language instruction in our schools.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Ralph Munro, Secretary of State (pro); Frank Brouillet, citizen (pro); and Paull Shin, citizen (pro).