

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 2964

As Passed House:
February 16, 2016

Title: An act relating to eliminating lunch copays for students who qualify for reduced-price lunches.

Brief Description: Eliminating lunch copays for students who qualify for reduced-price lunches.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Gregerson, Santos, Peterson, Rossetti, Kuderer, Stanford, Hudgins, Ormsby, Frame and Bergquist).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Appropriations: 2/8/16, 2/9/16 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/16/16, 54-43.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Eliminates lunch copays for students who qualify for reduced-price lunches under the National School Lunch Program.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 17 members: Representatives Dunshee, Chair; Ormsby, Vice Chair; Cody, Fitzgibbon, Hansen, Hudgins, S. Hunt, Jinkins, Kagi, Lytton, Pettigrew, Robinson, Sawyer, Senn, Springer, Sullivan and Tharinger.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Chandler, Ranking Minority Member; Parker, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Wilcox, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Buys, Condotta, Dent, Haler, Harris, Magendanz, Schmick, Stokesbary, Taylor and Van Werven.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative MacEwen.

Staff: Jessica Harrell (786-7349).

Background:

Child Nutrition Programs.

There are a variety of child nutrition programs subsidized by the United States Department of Agriculture and administered by the state to provide healthy food to children. The programs include the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), the Child and Adult Care Food Program, the Summer Food Service Program, the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, and the Special Milk Program. The NSLP and the SBP are federally assisted meal programs operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. The programs provide nutritionally balanced, low-cost, or free lunches to children each school day.

Free and Reduced-Price Meals.

In order for students to qualify for free meals, their family's income must be at or below 130 percent of the federal poverty level. Students whose families have an income between 130 percent and 185 percent of the federal poverty level are eligible for reduced-price meals (up to 40 cents per lunch). Students whose families earn more than 185 percent of the poverty level pay full price, but the meals in all cases are federally subsidized to some extent.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

To the extent that funds are appropriated for this purpose, beginning with the 2016-17 school year, lunch copays for pre-kindergarten through grade 12 students qualifying for reduced-price lunches are phased out, until all lunch copays are completely eliminated in the 2020-21 school year.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The elimination of lunch copays is another provision that would help the students that need it most, to get the nutrition they need to start their day and keep their day going right.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Claire Lane, Anti-Hunger and Nutrition Coalition.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.