

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2086

As Reported By House Committee On:

Appropriations

Title: An act relating to the learning assistance program.

Brief Description: Changing learning assistance program funding provisions.

Sponsors: Representative Brumsickle.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Appropriations: 3/21/95, 3/22/95 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 28 members: Representatives Silver, Chairman; Clements, Vice Chairman; Huff, Vice Chairman; Pelesky, Vice Chairman; Sommers, Ranking Minority Member; Valle, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Beeksma; Brumsickle; Carlson; Chappell; Cooke; Crouse; G. Fisher; Foreman; Grant; Hargrove; Hickel; Jacobsen; Lambert; Lisk; McMorris; Poulsen; Reams; Sehlin; Sheahan; Talcott; Thibaudeau and Wolfe.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Basich; Dellwo and Rust.

Staff: Jack Daray (786-7178).

Background: The Learning Assistance Program (LAP) is a state-funded remediation program for students in grades K-9 who need extra help to acquire basic learning skills. LAP funding is based on the percentage of each district's students scoring in the bottom 25 percent (quartile) on the fourth and eighth grade tests.

In 1990-91, 22.4 percent of the 4th grade students scored in the lowest quartile on a nationally normed test. A new test was implemented in 1991-92. The number of students scoring in the lowest quartile increased to 25.2 percent and is estimated to grow to 29 percent by 1994-95. Questions have been raised about the validity of the test due to the fact that the number of students scoring in the bottom quartile increased at the same time the new test was implemented. Due to concerns about the

validity of the test, the funding formula was revised in the 1993-95 legislative budget to discount questionable test results.

In the 1993-95 budget, the test scores were discounted 86 percent and the Superintendent of Public Instruction was directed to recommend a funding formula consistent with the assessment system developed by the Commission on Student Learning. This study was due by the 1995-97 biennium with provision for the superintendent to delay the recommendation if the assessment system was not developed. Since the assessment system is not yet developed, the superintendent did not make recommendations.

A study of LAP by the Legislative Budget Committee suggested that an option for changing funding for LAP include adding a factor for poverty or other demographic measures associated with low educational achievement.

Summary of Bill: The funding formula is to be revised in the 1995-97 legislative budget to adjust test results due to continuing concerns about the validity of the test and consideration of other formula factors.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction is to develop recommendations for a new allocation formula for the 1996-97 school year. The recommendations are to be based upon the initial implementation of the new assessment system for reading, writing, communication, and mathematics coinciding with the Essential Academic Learning Requirements being developed by the Commission on Student Learning.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on March 20, 1995.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: None.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: None.