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**ESSB 6002** - H AMD TO H AMD (H-4473.1/14) **836**

By Representative Dahlquist

**OUT OF ORDER 03/04/2014**

 On page 274, after line 16, insert the following:

"NEW SECTION. **Sec. 923** (1)(a) The legislature finds that Article IX of the state Constitution provides: "It is the paramount duty of the state to make ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders ... " The legislature further finds that the legislature's duty under Article IX of the state Constitution is to define and amply fund the program of basic education using dependable resources.

 (b) The legislature acknowledges that while local levies cannot be used to fund basic education, local levies enable schools to provide programs and activities beyond that required by Article IX of the state Constitution. The legislature recognizes that local levies are important to the educational funding system and is a primary method for communities to show support of the local schools.

 (c) The legislature intends to create a legislative task force to review the use of local levies by school districts and the equity issues resulting from various aspects of the local levy process, and to recommend approaches to address the equity issues.

 (2)(a) The joint task force on local education financing reform is created to review the use of local levies by school districts and the equity issues resulting from various aspects of the local levy process, recommend approaches and draft legislation to address the equity issues identified, and submit a report to the governor and the legislature by December 1, 2014.

 (b) Appointments to the task force shall be completed within thirty days of the effective date of this section. The task force shall consist of eight voting members and two ex officio members.

 (i) The voting members shall be:

 (A) Four members from the house of representatives, two from each major caucus, appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives; and

 (B) Four members from the senate, two from each major caucus, appointed by the majority leader and minority leader of the major caucuses of the senate.

 (ii) The two ex officio members shall be:

 (A) The governor or the governor's designee; and

 (B) The superintendent of public instruction or the superintendent's designee.

 (c) The voting members of the task force shall select cochairs from the voting members of the task force.

 (d) The task force shall:

 (i) Review the work of the levy and local effort assistance technical working group created in accordance with chapter 548, Laws of 2009, and amended by chapter 236, Laws of 2010, and other relevant studies and information;

 (ii) Review the use of local levies by school districts, including the level of funding and how the funding is used by school districts;

 (iii) Review equity issues related to various aspects of the local levy process, including school district levy authority, the determination of the levy base, the different levy lids, and levy equalization;

 (iv) Recommend approaches in a report to the governor and the legislature to address the equity issues and provide a system for state and local funds that are distributed in an equitably but not necessarily equivalent manner so that all children have the opportunity to meet the state's academic standards and become prepared for postsecondary careers and education. Any recommendation included in the report must be supported by at least six voting members of the task force. The report must include draft legislation to implement the recommendations of the task force.

 (e) The task force shall receive staff and logistical support from the house of representatives office of program research, senate committee services, office of financial management, and the office of the superintendent of public instruction. The first meeting of the task force shall be convened by the house of representatives office of program research and senate committee services within forty-five days of the effective date of this section.

 (f) Legislative members of the task force shall be reimbursed for travel expenses as provided in RCW 44.04.120."

 Renumber the remaining sections consecutively and correct any internal references accordingly.

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|  |  EFFECT:  Creates a joint task force on local education financing reform to review the use of, and equity issues related to local levies. The task force consists of four members from the House of Representatives, four members from the Senate, the Governor or his designee, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction, or his designee. The Governor and Superintendent are non-voting members. The task force is staffed by Senate Committee Services and the Office of Program Research, with additional support from the Office of Financial Management and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The task force is required to review the use of local levies by school districts and equity issues resulting from various aspects of the local levy process. The task force must submit its report to the governor and the legislature recommending changes to the current funding system that addresses equity issues in the local levy process and provides a system for state and local funds that are distributed in an equitable manner, by December 1, 2014. The recommendation of the task force must be supported by at least six voting members. FISCAL IMPACT: No net change to appropriated levels. |

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