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HOUSE BILL 2219

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State of Washington                      64th Legislature                      2015 Regular Session

By Representatives Hunter, Sullivan, Carlyle, and Santos

Read first time 03/30/15. Referred to Committee on Appropriations.

1            AN ACT Relating to removing the exception for expenditures  
2 related to legislatively enacted basic education enhancements from  
3 the four-year balanced budget requirement; amending RCW 43.88.055;  
4 creating a new section; and declaring an emergency.

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

6            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that in 2012, when  
7 the four-year balanced budget and budget outlook process were first  
8 enacted, exclusion of expenditures related to the legislative  
9 definition of basic education in chapter 548, Laws of 2009 was  
10 necessary. The exclusion was based on the amount of time until the  
11 2018 statutory completion date and the discretion given to the  
12 legislature in chapter 548, Laws of 2009 and chapter 236, Laws of  
13 2010 over intermediate implementation steps. As the 2018 deadline for  
14 complete implementation draws near, investments in the 2015-2017  
15 fiscal biennium will be crucial to completing the scheduled basic  
16 education enhancements. For these reasons, the legislature finds  
17 fulfilling the purposes of the budget outlook and four-year balanced  
18 budget statutes requires inclusion, rather than exclusion, of these  
19 projected basic education expenditures in these budgeting processes.

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

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

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

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

13       (2) For purposes of this section:

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

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

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

1           (3) Subsection (1)(a) and (b) of this section does not apply to  
2 an appropriations bill that makes net reductions in general fund and  
3 related funds appropriations and is enacted between July 1st and  
4 February 15th of any fiscal year.

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

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

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