

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1525

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, APRIL 3, 1991

Brief Description: Authorizing procedures to enable school district employees to obtain government travel and subsistence rates.

SPONSORS: House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Schmidt, Peery, Wood, Brumsickle, Zellinsky, Wilson, Anderson and Neher).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Bailey, Chairman; Craswell, Murray, Oke, Pelz, Rinehart, A. Smith, and Talmadge.

Staff: Leslie Goldstein (786-7424)

Hearing Dates: March 27, 1991; April 3, 1991

BACKGROUND:

The State of Washington through the Department of General Administration has negotiated with the various airlines and car rental agencies and has obtained preferred rates for state employee travel. The negotiated contract with the airlines applies only to state agencies and institutions of higher education.

School districts are financed with funds from federal, state, and local sources. The school boards of each school district set their own rates of reimbursement for travel expenses. When school district employees are reimbursed for their travel expenses, the school districts charge the travel reimbursement expense against the program or division relating to the purpose for the travel.

Educational Service Districts (ESDs) are financed with funds from federal and state sources. In addition, some programs are funded through cooperatives between a number of school districts. The ESDs follow Office of Financial Management guidelines. When ESD employees are reimbursed for their travel expenses, the travel reimbursement expenses are charged against the program or division relating to the purpose for the travel.

SUMMARY:

In order to obtain the lower state preferred travel rates, ESDs and school districts are allowed to charge travel expenses incurred by employees and board members during official travel to the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) if the travel is funded by state dollars and is authorized by the ESDs and school districts. The employee or board member is required to use the supplier giving the preferred rate. SPI bills the ESDs and school districts for any expenses paid, and the ESDs and school districts are required to reimburse SPI.

The state of Washington, through the Department of General Administration, is directed to take all reasonable and necessary action to include ESDs and school districts as direct beneficiaries of any contract negotiated by the state for preferred rates.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED SENATE AMENDMENT:

Sections permitting school districts and educational service districts to use state preferred provider rates expire December 31, 1991. Savings language is inserted stating that the intent is to not impair any contractual rights in effect as of the effective date of the legislation.

TESTIMONY FOR:

Currently school district and educational service district employees do not get preferred rates when traveling although their travel is funded with state dollars. State employees do get preferred rates. State dollars funding travel expenses should be treated the same everywhere.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: Representative Karen Schmidt, original sponsor; Marcia Costello, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Dwayne Slate, Washington State School Directors Association