

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5670

As of February 12, 2025

Title: An act relating to creating the fuel tax assistance grant program.

Brief Description: Creating the fuel tax assistance grant program.

Sponsors: Senators McCune, Fortunato, Holy, Wilson, J., Boehnke, Dozier, Christian, Warnick, Wagoner, Goehner, Short and Braun.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/13/25.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates the Fuel Tax Assistance Grant Program for school districts with a geographic area of 450 square miles or more.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Alex Fairfortune (786-7416)

Background: Pupil Transportation Funding. The state's statutory program of basic education includes transportation to and from school for eligible students, including transportation of students for special education services and between schools and learning centers.

To provide transportation allocations to school districts the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction uses the Student Transportation Allocation Reporting System (STARS), which is a regression formula that uses prior year expenditures, student passenger counts, and district characteristics to calculate the expected costs of to and from transportation. The STARS formula result is then compared to the district's allowable transportation expenditures from the prior year. The school district receives the lesser of the two calculated amounts plus any compensation adjustments provided in the operating budget.

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

Climate Commitment Account. The Climate Commitment Account is a sub-account of the Climate Investment Account that focuses on projects that support Washington's transition to a low-carbon economy, improve air quality, and increase access to clean energy. Moneys from the Climate Commitment Account may only be spent after appropriation.

Summary of Bill: The Fuel Tax Assistance Grant Program is created, subject to appropriation. The purpose of the Fuel Tax Assistance Grant Program is to provide relief for rural school districts that have large geographic areas for increased program costs associated with rising fuel prices. School districts are eligible for the Fuel Tax Assistance Grant if they have a geographic area of 450 square miles or greater.

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction is directed to administer the Fuel Tax Assistance Grant, and funds from the Climate Commitment Account may be used to fund the Fuel Tax Assistance Grant Program.

Appropriation: The bill contains a section or sections to limit implementation to the availability of amounts appropriated for that specific purpose.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 10, 2025.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.