

# Alaska State Legislature

## Senate Education Committee

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## SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

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### Senate Bill 182

School districts in the state of Alaska are facing shortfalls in overall funding, in part due to the rising cost of pupil transportation programs. It is costing more each year to transport our students safely to and from school. Senate Bill 182 changes the pupil transportation funding, which allows school districts to keep more of their foundation funding in the classroom. Currently most districts have to subsidize their pupil transportation programs, which takes foundation formula dollars out of the classroom.

This legislation recalibrates the funding for pupil transportation based on the most recent audits by the Department of Education and Early Development. The amounts will be adjusted annually according to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for Anchorage. This change allows the funding to match the amounts agreed to in their most recent contract negotiations, providing a more realistic figure for the actual cost of pupil transportation.

Although pupil transportation is an indirect cost of education, it is extremely important in Alaska. Road conditions are often dangerous, daylight during the school year is minimal, and sometimes the distance of transporting students is immense. If we cannot get the students to school, we cannot give them the education they need to thrive.