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FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
1991 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. _____

Revision Date: _____ Department Affected: Education
 Title: School Term BRU: K-12 Support
 Component: Foundation
 Sponsor: Fischer
 Requestor: Fischer COMPONENT SERIAL NO.

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Expenditures/Revenues: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 92	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96	FY 97
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

CAPITAL						
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REVENUE						
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FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND						
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
TOTAL	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

Estimate of current year impact: _____

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary.)

Prepared By: Mary Hakala Phone: 465-2800
 Division: Commissioner's Office Date: 2/21/91
 Approved by Commissioner: Steve Hole, Acting Commissioner
 Agency: Education Date: 2/21/91

Distribution (by preparer): Legislative Finance, Legislative Sponsor, Requestor, OMB, & Impacted Agency(ies).

Alaska State Legislature

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State Senate

MEMORANDUM

TO: Senator Arliss Sturgulewski, Chairman
Senate Health, Education and
Social Services Committee

FROM: Senator Paul Fischer *PF.*

SUBJECT: Senate Bill 132
(length of the school term)

DATE: February 25, 1991

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I would appreciate your scheduling the above referenced bill for a hearing before the Senate Health, Education and Social Services Committee at your earliest possible convenience.

As a you are aware, this subject has been before us before. Last session it was passed by both bodies of the legislature; however, it was ultimately vetoed by the Governor Cowper. Senate Bill 132 is identical to HCS Senate Bill 171 (HESS) from last session.

Certain children in the state presently receive less than the standard 180 days of instruction that is mandated by law. Some of these absences are attributed to subsistence lifestyles of parents during hunting and fishing periods, as well as commercial fishing openings. In turn, children lose valuable educational opportunities and schools just indicate the children as being absent. This legislation simply gives a local school board the discretion to adjust the school day to accomodate the different lifestyle needs as well as allow for other situations that might cause a closure of a school.

Current law presently allows for adjustments of the school term for correction of asbestos problems. Other conditions that may arise to force a closure would be frozen pipes, flooding, or volcanic eruptions as experienced on the Kenai peninsula just last year.

I have attached back up information for the committee files.

Your consideration would be greatly appreciated.

PAF/sgn
Attachments

STEVE COWPER
GOVERNOR



STATE OF ALASKA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
JUNEAU

May 16, 1990

The Honorable Tim Kelly
President of the Senate
Alaska State Legislature
P.O. Box V
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Mr. President:

Under the authority of art. II, sec. 15, of the Alaska Constitution, I have vetoed the following bill:

HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
FOR SENATE BILL NO. 171 (HESS)
(Relating to the school term.)

This bill would have amended AS 14.03.030 (Length of School Term). Under the language of the bill, the Commissioner of Education has the authority to approve a school term of "not less than 160 days" for any reason, if requested by a local board. The original language of AS 14.03.030 allows a shorter term only when student health or safety is threatened.

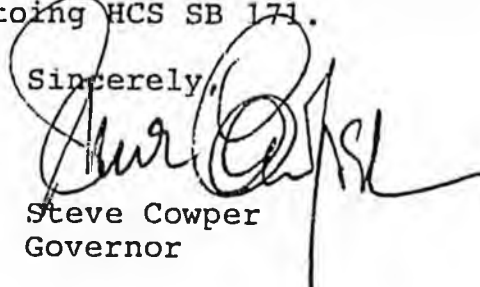
I understand that the legislation was directed at meeting the unique needs of a very small number of schools. In attempting to accommodate the needs of these few students, the legislation grants unusually broad powers to the commissioner in an area which should be of concern to state policy makers.

We know that a significant reason for lower school achievement in this country is the relatively short school term compared with other industrialized nations. In addition, Alaska's statute is already more liberal than many other states in allowing in-service training days to be counted as part of the 180-day school year. Many states insist that the mandatory school term be made up of instructional days, with in-service days added to the total. It is possible that under the new language some districts will pressure for shorter terms to accommodate particular life styles. While sensitivity to community needs is necessary, a shorter school term merely exacerbates the problem of relatively poor student

achievement in many areas of our state, as evidenced by the recent statewide assessment results.

The current statute allows for a shorter school term under emergency situations. To allow a shorter school term for any other, less compelling reason would penalize our students. I am therefore vetoing HCS SB 171.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Cowper", written over the word "Sincerely,".

Steve Cowper
Governor