

SB

192

SFIN

FILE

SB 192

was referred to the
Senate Finance
Committee

Hearing(s) were held

The bill did not move
from Committee

Interim:

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Wasilla, Alaska 99654
(907) 376-3370
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Session:

State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
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SENATOR LYDA GREEN
SENATE DISTRICT G

SB 192 SPONSOR STATEMENT

"An Act relating to reimbursement of municipal bonds for school construction; and providing for an effective date."

SB 192 seeks to extend until July 1, 2006 the statutory date for municipalities to authorize school construction and renovation bonds and apply for reimbursement from the state.

The Matanuska-Susitna School District is growing by nearly 500 students each year, which is roughly equivalent to the population of an elementary school. This growth places significant strain on existing school facilities. Currently, there is no available classroom space in any of the district's core-area elementary schools. The district placed 52 portable classrooms throughout the district to alleviate overcrowding in the most impacted schools. The district estimates needing 23 more portables to meet FY06 enrollment growth (at a cost of \$70,000 per portable).

In fall, 2007, the district will open a new Wasilla-area elementary school. By that time, the district's core area elementary schools will have well exceeded their actual capacity by approximately 2000 students, enough to fill four additional elementary schools.

Bonding for new schools is a major piece of the solution for addressing this rapid growth. Debt-reimbursement has been successfully used in the past to construct new facilities.

As of January 1, 2005 the school bond debt reimbursement program ended. I urge your support of SB 192 to extend the program to allow school districts to address their construction and renovation needs.

Cody Rice

From: Kim Floyd [Kim.Floyd@matsuk12.us]
Sent: Tuesday, January 18, 2005 2:38 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: MSBSD Polling Results

[REDACTED]

To follow are the results of our recent public opinion poll, which surveyed 609 Valley residents, 60 percent of whom do not have children in Mat-Su schools.

There appears to be overwhelming support for school construction. We asked respondents to consider three elementary schools and a new high school for the core Palmer/Wasilla areas.

- 77.4 percent favored a elementary in Settler's Bay
- 68 percent favored an elementary in the Springer Loop area (Palmer)
- 69.7 percent favored an elementary in the south Trunk Road area (Palmer)
- 71.7 percent favored a high school in the core area

- 58.5 percent favored a bond package of \$50 million for three elementary schools
- 52.3 percent favored a bond package of \$80 million for three elementary schools and a high school

- If 60 percent reimbursement were offered by the state, the percentage of those indicating they would vote "yes" on an \$80 million bond package increased to 74.5 percent (three elementary schools and a high school); Specifically for Representative Gatto's information, 75 percent of Palmer residents indicated support, as did 74 percent of Republicans

As you know, a 74.5 percent approval rating in preliminary polling is phenomenal. We think the results are very telling about our community's support for school construction.

Our community has come out in opposition to our proposed boundary changes, which would move students from core area schools to outerlying areas, such as Sutton and Houston. During town meetings in November, participants indicated that school construction should be the primary source of relief to overcrowded facilities. In addition, families would rather we build portables and keep students closer to home than change boundaries.

The Board is to hear public comment and vote on proposed boundary changes on Wednesday. If not approved, we will work to secure funding for portables and perhaps, in extreme cases, increase class sizes.

Please let me know if you need more information, and how we might help on the passage of HB13. Please share our thanks with Representatives Gatto and Gruenberg for sponsoring this bill.

Thanks,

Kim Floyd



**WRANGELL
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**
DISTRICT OFFICE

GATEWAY TO THE STIKINE

P.O. BOX 2319
WRANGELL, ALASKA 99929
Telephone (907) 874-2347
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February 2, 2005

Representative Carl Gatto
Room 411
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

RE: HB13

Dear Honorable Representative Gatto:

I would like to provide you with my full support of House Bill No. 13, "An act relating to reimbursement of municipal bonds for school construction."

School districts across Alaska are working hard to meet multiple challenges, including increasing student performance in core academic subjects and implementing the goals of the State of Alaska Quality Schools Initiative and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. These districts are also struggling to maintain, replace, and modernize their local school buildings.

The passage of HB13 will trigger a school debt reimbursement program for school district bonds for capital and major maintenance projects. The school debt reimbursement program will reimburse school projects at 70 percent taking the burden off of municipalities. HB13, if passed, will help many rural and urban school districts and communities catch up with unmet school construction and major maintenance needs.

Your continued support of public education and Alaska's youth is very much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Susan J. Sciabbarrasi
Superintendent

SJS: kp

Cc: Alaska State House of Representatives

ALASKA COUNCIL



OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

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Alaska Council of School Administrators

January 31, 2005

Representative Mark Neuman, Chair
House Special Committee on Education

Dear Chair Neuman and Committee members:

Enclosed is resolution 04-8, *Bond Debt Reimbursement*, adopted by the organizations that make up the Alaska Council of School Administrators. This resolution is presented in support of HB 13.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary A. Francis, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Resolution 04-8

BOND DEBT REIMBURSEMENT

WHEREAS, the voters have supported several local and statewide bond initiatives for school construction and major maintenance; and

WHEREAS, the public was informed that local and statewide bond efforts would receive State support in the repayment of the bond effort; and

WHEREAS, the planning of construction projects and major maintenance efforts were carefully considered with anticipated budget information secured from a variety of sources, including information from the State of Alaska; and

WHEREAS, a significant reduction in the repayment schedule from the State of Alaska will adversely affect local budgets at an extremely challenging time; now

THEREFORE IT IS RESOLVED that the Alaska Council of School Administrators supports full funding of previously approved bonds as they were presented to the people of local communities and a continued debt reimbursement program that also allows participation by districts unable to bond.

Adopted by the Alaska Council of School Administrators (AASA, AAESP, AASSP and ALASBO) October and December 2004.

May 2005

Anchorage School District POSITION STATEMENT: SB 192

W) 907-742-4322 (F) 907-742-4417
Wiget_Larry@asdk12.org

TO: SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE
FROM: LARRY WIGET, DIRECTOR, GOVERNMENT RELATIONS
SUBJECT: SB 192 – AN ACT RELATING TO REIMBURSEMENT OF
MUNICIPAL BONDS FOR SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

The Anchorage School District supports SB 192.

On an annual basis, the School Board adopts a Six-Year Capital Improvement Plan that addresses the anticipated levels of student enrollment and shifts in enrollment, along with school facility condition and functionality from an educational perspective. The plan delineates the construction priorities for the District over each succeeding six –year period. It is reviewed annually as conditions change.

With nearly 94 school buildings in our care, a few major renovation and construction projects are needed nearly every year to keep all of our facilities in good, safe condition and to ensure they are highly effective learning environments. Extending the debt reimbursement program to July 1, 2006 will help meet school construction needs in areas of the state that are able to bond for school facilities.

The Anchorage School Board supports extending the state law reimbursing municipalities 60% - 70% of the cost of school construction bonds from January 1, 2005 to July 1, 2006.

Debt Reimbursement – 2005 ASD Legislative Priority

Safe, efficient, and technologically appropriate infrastructure is an essential ingredient in achieving academic success. This has largely been accomplished through the successful partnership between the Legislature and local taxpayers. The Anchorage School Board requests the Legislature and the Governor's Office to continue this partnership by fully honoring all past commitments for bonded indebtedness reimbursement.

To meet future school construction needs, the Anchorage School Board requests the Legislature and the Governor's Office reinstate and extend the school debt reimbursement program for new local bond propositions and continue to fully fund that program.