

REVENUE: Revenue statement issued

FISCAL: Minimal fiscal impact, no statement issued

Action:	Do Pass and Rescind the Subsequent Referral to the Committee on Ways and Means and Be Referred to the Committee on Revenue
Vote:	10 - 0 - 0
Yeas:	Dembrow, Harker, Huffman, Komp, Maurer, Roblan, Sprenger, Thatcher, VanOrman, Gelser
Nays:	0
Exc.:	0
Prepared By:	Kevin T. Christiansen, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	3/30, 4/17

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Prohibits elementary school from qualifying as remote small elementary school if it is within eight miles, by the nearest traveled road, from another elementary school in the same district unless there is a condition that makes transportation to another school not feasible. Permits school to qualify as remote small elementary school if location of the school has not changed since January 1, 1995, and if school qualifies as a remote small school on the effective date of the measure. Permits school to qualify as small high school if location of the school has not changed since January 1, 1995, and if school qualifies as small high school on the effective date of the measure. Applies to State School Fund distributions commencing with 2009-2010 distribution. Declares emergency; effective July 1, 2009.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Viability of schools in remote areas of the state
- Declining school enrollment
- Economic impacts on small communities
- Benefits of small rural schools

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: House Bill 2558 updates the weighted funding formula for small schools. The Legislative Assembly has recognized the need for extra school funding for school districts with small schools. These small schools are generally referred to as remote or necessary small schools. House Bill 2558 allows an elementary school to qualify as a remote small elementary school if it is more than more than eight miles away from another elementary school in the district. Current law provides that a school would need to be more than eight miles away from schools in other districts as well. After gathering data on which schools would qualify as remote small elementary schools or small high schools, the school district with the remote small elementary schools and small high schools would receive additional funding under the state funding formula.