

SPONSOR STATEMENT

Senate Bill 202 Education Funding and Pupil Transportation

Senate Bill 202 includes two provisions relating to K-12 public education that are intertwined with the Senate operating budget.

First, Senate Bill 202 revises the method in which local school districts are reimbursed for pupil transportation costs. Over the past seven years, district transportation costs have increased 77 percent; \$32.8 million in FY97 to \$58.1 million in FY04. This legislation establishes a pupil transportation grant program as a means to control the growth of these costs.

Under the proposed grant program, local school districts will receive an allocation based on their actual per student transportation cost in FY03. In FY04 and beyond, the pupil transportation grant will be determined by multiplying the district's transportation allocation by their student enrollment. This new reimbursement program recognizes fiscal constraint while continuing to support local school districts with their transportation costs.

Secondly, Senate Bill 202 increases the K-12 education funding per student amount to \$4,169, an increase of \$159. This change distributes \$32.1 million to 53 school districts through the education foundation formula; a plan that offers stable and predictable revenue to all 53 school districts. This much-needed increase will help our school districts to continue to improve their educational programs so that all students receive the best education possible.

Please join me in endorsing and passing [Senate Bill 202](#).