

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

March 14, 1997 Hearing Room E

08:15 A.M. Tapes 64 - 67

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Rep. Dennis Luke, Chair

Rep. Terry Thompson, Vice-Chair

Rep. Roger Beyer

Rep. Ryan Deckert

Rep. Bob Jenson

Rep. Charles Starr

Rep. Ron Sunseri

MEMBER EXCUSED:

STAFF PRESENT:

Bryan Boehringer, Administrator

Joan Diaz, Administrative Support

MEASURE/ISSUES HEARD:

HB 2692 - Work Session

SB 217 - Public Hearing and Work Session

SB 297 - Public Hearing and Work Session

HB 2770 - Public Hearing

These minutes are in compliance with Senate and House Rules. Only text enclosed in quotation marks reports a speaker's exact words. For complete contents, please refer to the tapes.

Tape/#	Speaker	Comments
TAPE 64, A		
005	Chair Luke	Opens meeting at 8:18 a.m. Opens work session on HB 2692.

<u>HB 2692 - WORK SESSION</u>		
	Chair Luke	Asks staff to explain the bill.
015	Bryan Boehringer	Committee Administrator explains the bill and explains the attached -1 amendments which indicate the dollar amount of \$7,865,000 is to be added on page 1, line 14 and delete "\$_____million."
	Rep. Sunseri	MOTION: Moves to ADOPT HB 2692-1 amendments dated 03/11/97.
	Chair Luke	Hearing no objection, declares the motion CARRIED.
	Rep. Sunseri	MOTION: Moves HB 2692 to the floor with a DO PASS AS AMENDED recommendation.
		VOTE: 6-1 AYE: 6 - Deckert, Jenson, Starr, Sunseri, Thompson, Luke NAY: 1 - Beyer
	Chair	The motion CARRIES. REP. MINNIS will lead discussion on the floor.
	Chair Luke	Closes work session on HB 2692. Opens public hearing on SB 217.
<u>SB 217 - PUBLIC HEARING</u>		
	Bret West	Interim Commissioner, Office of Community College Services, testifies regarding SB 217 (EXHIBIT A).
105	David Mesirov	Director, Portland Public Schools, testifies in favor of SB 217.
	Chair Luke	Closes public hearing on SB 217. Opens work session on SB 217.
<u>SB 217 -</u>		

<u>WORK SESSION</u>		
143	Rep. Starr	MOTION: Moves SB 217 to the floor with a DO PASS recommendation.
		VOTE: 6-1 AYE: 6 - Beyer, Deckert, Jenson, Starr, Thompson, Luke NAY: 1 - Sunseri
	Chair Luke	The motion CARRIES. REP. STARR will lead discussion on the floor.
	Chair Luke	Closes work session on SB 217. Opens public hearing on SB 297.
<u>SB 297 - PUBLIC HEARING</u>		
162	Greg McMurdo	Deputy Superintendent, Department of Education (DOE), testifies in favor of SB 297 (EXHIBIT B). Explains the no votes in the Senate.
205	Chair Luke	Asks why section 2 is in the bill.
210	McMurdo	Continues testimony.
220	Rep. Sunseri	Asks about the status of the plan to construct an evaluation center and sell the Oregon School for the Blind property.
	McMurdo	Responds that a former plan was conceived to combine both schools, but that bill did not pass.
245	Rep. Sunseri	Asks if all the other states have schools for the blind. Asks if the Oregon school has had out of state guests/students.
	Rep. Thompson	Asks how many students attend the schools and if there is a waiting list.
	McMurdo	Responds there are approximately 50 students attending the School for the Blind and approximately 100 students attend the School for the Deaf.
		Comments that the School for the Blind has a very active summer

	Chair Luke	program which increases its population.
270	Don Lorenzen	Director, Oregon School for the Deaf, speaks in favor of SB 297. Clarifies there are 116 students, K-12 grades, and that the school has never had a waiting list.
301	Lorenzen	Continues discussing school's capacity and how ADA regulations affect it. In the early 1970's the school had 299 students, but through mainstreaming, the school's population has decreased.
323	Rep. Thompson	Comments that it should be on the record that if this bill is passed, it won't give the DOE the opportunity to shut down the schools.
	McMurdo	Responds that the DOE has that authority now, but it would not be economically feasible. The intention to keep both schools open until the Legislature decides otherwise. Explains why the DOE is in the midst of acquiring clear title to the property.
373	Chair Luke	Suggests the committee tour both schools. The DOE and the Legislature are responsible for the operation of both schools.
402	Eric Henderson	Student, Oregon School for the Deaf testifies in favor of SB 297. Explains he is graduating now and has appreciated the facilities.
TAPE 65, A		
002	Henderson	Continues testimony.
014	Chair Luke	Asks what advantage is there to having students from foreign countries at the school.
	Henderson	Explains that cultural exchange can take place.
045	Bonnie McAlister	Student, Oregon School for the Deaf, testifies in favor of SB 297. Comments that there is an advantage in expanding the student population. Currently, in drama class, each student has to play two roles in the same play. Students want to experience different cultures and different languages. Sports will give students more competition.
100	Shannon Eagon	Student, Oregon School for the Deaf, testifies in favor of SB 297. Different cultures would be valuable in strengthening the deaf culture. There would be different signing, traditions, and values to learn.

146	Rep. Jenson	Asks if signing is a universal language.
	Eagon	Responds that different countries have different sign languages.
152	Chair Luke	Asks if the American Sign Language (ASL) is accepted as a second language in some of the universities and colleges.
164	Scott Pfaff	Student, Oregon School for the Deaf, testifies in favor of SB 297.
231	Lorenzen	Testifies that most students at the Oregon School for the Deaf have come from other public schools. Higher Education is considering ASL a second language. More and more high schools are offering ASL as a class. Explains that McKay High School students have taken the auto body class at Oregon School for the Deaf. Chemeketa Community College students attend an ASL class on Wednesday evenings.
296	Rep. Thompson	Comments that that kind of outreach benefits everyone.
311	Charles Woodcock	Citizen, Retiree, Oregon School for the Blind, testifies. Asks if Section 2 establishes a fund for tuition purposes only or will other monies be deposited in that fund. Comments he was told that the Oregon School of the Blind has a waiting list.
	Chair Luke	Responds he will ascertain if that is true from the director of that school.
365	Woodcock	Comments that he would prefer the title to the Schools be held in the Legislature and not the Department of Education
	Jane Mulholland	Asst. Superintendent, Special Education, Department of Education, states there is not a waiting list at the schools for long term residents but that this situation can change from time to time.
TAPE 64, B		
005	Mulholland	Continues testimony. Assures committee no Oregon student will be denied admittance.
	Rep. Sunseri	Asks how is tuition for this school currently handled.
	Mulhollad	Responds that tuition currently is deposited in the General Fund.

060	Rep. Thompson	Asks if perhaps the Legislature should expand the student body to interact with different cultures. Asks if we are missing an opportunity for other public school students to interact with students at the School for the Deaf.
071	Mulholland	Discusses reverse mainstreaming and the advantages to it.
099	Chair Luke	Inquires if there is anything in this bill that would prevent DOE from receiving grants, donations, etc., in that fund.
	McMurdo	Responds that he didn't know as it never occurred to him to consider that option. Comments that he senses fear from the committee that the fund would be used for purposes other than students' needs and assures the committee that is not the case.
150	David Beem	President, People First, testifies in favor of SB 297. Comments about using the "kicker" for the Oregon School for the Blind and the Oregon School for the Deaf.
	Bill Crushell	Teacher, Oregon School for the Deaf, comments he is the legal guardian for the international student who precipitated this bill. Testifies in favor of SB 297.
	Chair Luke	Closes public hearing on SB 297. Opens work session on SB 297.
<u>SB 297 - WORK SESSION</u>		
215	Rep. Sunseri	Comments that the question Rep. Thompson got on the record concerning schools' closure was helpful.
219	Rep. Deckert	MOTION: Moves SB 297 to the floor with a DO PASS recommendation.
		VOTE: 7-0
		AYE: In a roll call vote, all members present vote Aye.
	Chair Luke	The motion CARRIES.
		REP. DECKERT will lead discussion on the floor.

	Chair Luke	Comments that he wants it on the record, that letters have been written which inferred that the Chair wanted to close the Oregon School for the Blind. In fact, the Chair has concern for the students and the current building site and would like to get a new building for the students.
	Chair Luke	Closes work session on SB 297. Opens public hearing on HB 2770.
HB 2770 - PUBLIC HEARING		
	Chair Luke	Asks authors of the bill to discuss bill.
288	Rep. Deckert	Represents District 8. Testifies in favor of HB 2770 (EXHIBIT C).
330	Rep. Courtney	Represents District 33. Testifies in favor of HB 2770 (EXHIBIT D). Stresses the need for individual attention in a student's life. Reduction in classroom sizes will allow for better teacher/student ratio.
TAPE 65, B		
004	Courtney	Continues testimony.
024	Rep. Deckert	Comments that legislature should fund education sufficiently so that an educational trust fund would not be needed to reduce class size.
045	Rep. Jim Hill	Represents District 5. Testifies in favor of HB 2770 (EXHIBIT E).
	Rep. Tony Corcoran	Represents District 44. Testifies in favor of HB 2770. California funded schools by passing a law to reduce classroom size which was funded with "unanticipated revenue." Oregon could do that as well.
165	Rep. Lee Beyer	Represents District 42. Testifies in favor of HB 2770 (EXHIBIT F). Comments that in his district they are opening three new schools this fall. Schools' populations are growing, resulting in overcrowding, but the numbers of teachers have decreased.
245	Rep. Dan Gardner	Represents District 13. Testifies in favor of HB 2770.
	Chair Luke	Asks if the sponsors of the bill are open to any amendments.

283	Rep. Courtney	Comments that using a grant approach and a targeted fund approach would allow specific districts to deal with unanticipated growth. Suggests dedicating the educational trust fund to teacher hiring only and maybe more narrowly focus this bill.
312	Paula Neher	Principal, Conestoga Middle School, Beaverton, testifies and provides information on her school. Comments that she is neutral on the bill and cautions that one cannot simplistically divide students by teacher to obtain a ratio since at middle school level, band, art, etc. come out of the basic formula. The impact of having 35 students per class are many since increasing numbers of students are "at risk" and "special needs" students.
TAPE 66, A		
004	Neher	Continues testimony.
008	Priscilla Turner	Parent relates experiences of her three children and how classroom sizes have changed from the period when her oldest child attended classes to when her youngest child attended classes.
084	Chair Luke	Comments that the fiscal analysis estimates that in the Salem-Keizer School District, it will cost \$2M to reduce class sizes by one student per year in grades K-12.
092	Rep. Deckert	Comments that reports from Washington and California indicate those states are making dramatic reductions in class sizes which puts Oregon at a competitive disadvantage.
101	Martha Schrader	Former classroom teacher and librarian gives perspective as a teacher and speaks in favor of HB 2770.
165	Laurie Wimmer	Government Relations Consultant, Oregon Education Association (OEA), testifies in favor of HB 2770, with qualifications (EXHIBIT G) .
221	Rep. Beyer	Asks if OEA supports reduction in classroom sizes.
	Wimmer	Responds that the organization does.
258	Ozzie Rose	Executive Director, Confederation of School Administrators, testifies against HB 2770 (EXHIBIT H) .

367	Rep. Deckert	Asks what is the best method of achieving smaller classes.
	Rose	Responds there should be more teachers and more adults in the classroom teaching as part of a team. The OEA will argue but a differentiated staff concept does work.
TAPE 67, A		
003	Rep. Thompson	Comments that when motivated parents get involved in the classroom the numbers we see are not truly representative of a problem.
010	Rose	Responds that it is correct that schools do not draw the same support from parents.
016	Rep. Jenson	Asks if there is a reduction of other personnel in the schools and teachers then assume those duties, have the numbers of teachers increased.
023	Rose	Responds when you cut staff support due to shortage of funding, tasks are reassigned to principals, administrators and teachers, without an increase in teachers.
	Chair Luke	Comments that everyone on this committee cares about students, and that the place for politics is on the House floor. Cautions against questioning other members' motives. Adjourns at 10:45 a.m.

Submitted By, Reviewed By,

Joan Diaz, Bryan Boehringer,

Administrative Support Administrator

EXHIBIT SUMMARY

A - SB 217, written testimony, Bret West, 1 pg

B - SB 297, written testimony, Greg McMurdo 1 pg

C - HB 2770, written testimony, Ryan Deckert, 1 pg

D - HB 2770, written testimony, Peter Courtney, 3 pp

E - HB 2770, written material, Jim Hill, 1 pg

F - HB 2770, written material, Lee Beyer, 3 pp

G - HB 2770, written testimony, Laurie Wimmer, 35 pp

H - HB 2770, written testimony, Ozzie Rose, 1 pg