

SENATE COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION

Hearing Room
Tapes - 56

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sen. Tom Hartung , Chair
Sen. Ken Baker
Sen. Shirley Gold
Sen. Marilyn Shannon
Sen. Cliff Trow

STAFF PRESENT:

Fallie Calder, Committee Administrator
Carolynn Gillson, Committee Assistant

MEASURES HEARD: SB 467 - exemption from mandatory merger req'tmt, PUB
SB 507 - allows elem. sch. dists. to vote on consolidation, PUB
SB 668 - allows OSB E to grant waiver from mandatory merger

req

These minutes contain materials which paraphrase and/or summarize
statements made during this session. Only text enclosed in quotation marks

report a speaker's exact words. For complete contents of the proceedings,
please refer to the tapes.

NOTE: Due to problem with an audio tape in the hearing room, the tape
sequence for this meeting is Tape 55A, 55B, 56A, 56B.

TAPE A

005 SENATOR TOM HARTUNG, Chair: Calls meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

PUBLIC HEARING ON SB 668

Witnesses: Sen. Bill Bradbury

015 SEN. BILL BRADBURY, Dist. 24: Talks about rural and outlying school
districts in Curry county that are being forced to consolidate with the
Gold Beach School District when it makes no sense to do so.

> SB 668 provides for school districts to apply for a waiver from the
Oregon State Board of Education (OSB E) to meet consolidation requirements.
> Like to see OSB E adopt specific criteria for waiver qualification and a
legislative directive to grant the waiver if the criteria is met.

041 SEN. KEN BAKER: Why wasn't this issue addressed when the Legislature
passed SB 917 originally?

BRADBURY: There was a much larger number of unconsolidated school
districts at that time and it did not make financial sense to have so many
separate school districts located right next to each other. More concerned

about school districts that are several miles apart.

SEN. BAKER: Does your bill address the issue of small school districts
that are offering a deficient educational plan and are close to a larger
school district?

SEN. BRADBURY: Talks about different reasons for exemption from
consolidation.

SEN. BAKER: If we intervene at this time, how do we make sure school
districts already in the consolidation process continue with the process?

SEN. BRADBURY: Only way is set criteria and have school districts make a
case.

125 SEN. CLIFF TROW: Suggests the bill say "shall" for the remote school
districts so it is automatic and "may" for other districts that are not
remote so it is discretionary.

SEN. BRADBURY: Need to give OSB E some direction. Doesn't make sense if it
does not save any money and does not improve educational quality.

PUBLIC HEARING ON SB 467

Witnesses: Sen. Gene Timms
John Danielson, Oregon Education Association (OEA)
Rep. Judy Uherbelau
Ozzie Rose, Confederation of Oregon School Districts (COSA)

180 SEN. GENE TIMMS, Dist 30: Talks about his amendment SB 467-5 (EXH. A)
providing for exemption for schools over 20 miles.

233 JOHN DANIELSON, OEA: Talks about basic concepts in all the merger bills

and the concerns of small school districts.

> Reviews history of the unification issue.
> Exemptions ought to be specific by school district other than passing it
over to OSB E on a criteria basis.
> Nothing in unification law closes school district - decision made by

local school boards.
 > Believes law is on the right track.

346 SEN. MARYLIN SHANNON: Talking about our children and our tax dollars.

368 REP. JUDY UHERBELAU, Dist. 52: Testifies in favor of SB 467 with amendments proposed by Sen. Timms and Hannon (EXH. B).
 > Talks about Pinehurst School District.

450 OZZIE ROSE, COSA: Testifies against SB 467, 507 and 668.
 > Issue now is equity. Funding judgments more fairly done if school districts all have the same responsibility - a K-12 program.
 > Talks about elementary districts left to unify that spend more than their high school districts.
 > Reviews the differences in spending.

TAPE 55B

002 ROSE: Easier to address issues of remote schools if we are unified.

SEN. BAKER: What about the quality of education?

ROSE: Believes overall quality for K-12 will be better.

PUBLIC HEARING ON SB 507

Witnesses: Robert Duffy, North Plains Elementary District
 Reed Langdon, Harris School District
 Mary Grimes, Linn County Farm Bureau
 William Lulay, Lourdes School District
 Suzie Sullivan, Hamilton Creek School District
 Lon Rankin, Hamilton Creek School District
 Leonard Zucker, Lacombe School District
 Garilyn Denton, Sand Ridge School District
 Gary Bennett, Sodaville School District
 David Legg, Sodaville School District
 Linda Duman, Lourdes School District
 Greg Newton, Victor Point School District
 Bill Steffen, Silver Crest School District
 Ralph Fisher, Victor Point Elementary
 Mary Oar, Black Butte Elementary
 John Danielson, OEA

035 ROBERT DUFFY, North Plains Elementary District: Reviews his written testimony in support of SB 507 because it allows for citizens to decide if they should unify (EXH. C).

095 REED LANGDON, senior at Harris School District, Harrisburg: Reviews his written testimony in support of SB 507 because he believe in maintaining small schools (EXH. D).

143 MARY GRIMES, Linn County Farm Bureau, Harrisburg: Reviews her testimony in support of SB 507 because it gives citizens the right to decide on unification by voting (EXH. E).

233 WILLIAM LULAY, Lourdes School District: Testifies in support of SB 507. Believes students educated in smaller schools have as good if not better education. Parents are more involved. Cost per student is less than in neighboring larger districts. Bill is for better education at lower costs.

310 SUZIE SULLIVAN, Hamilton Creek School District in Lebanon: Reviews written testimony in support of SB 507 because it would allow local districts the right to choose consolidation or not based on their individual needs (EXH. F).

367 LON RANKIN, Hamilton Creek School, Lebanon: Reviews written testimony (EXH. G) in support of SB 507 because of how unification would affect the Hamilton Creek School District.

466 LEONARD ZUCKER, Lacombe School District: Reviews written testimony in support of SB 507 and listing the areas unification will affect (EXH. H).

TAPE 56A

026 ZUCKER: Continues his testimony.

086 GARILIN DENTON, Sand Ridge School District in Lebanon: Reviews written testimony describing their school district and community and supporting SB 507 so each school district can decide if they want to unify. (EXH. I).

108 GARY BENNETT, Sodaville School District, Lebanon: Reviews written testimony in support of SB 507 (EXH. J) because it would allow for a vote on consolidation.

142 DAVID LEGG, Sodaville School District, Lebanon: Reviews written testimony in support of SB 507 (EXH. K) because unification would take away their community support.

192 LINDA DUMAN, Lourdes School, Scio: Reviews information included in her handout in support of SB 507 (EXH. L).

240 GREG NEWTON, Victor Point School District, Silverton: Testifies in support of SB 507 and talks about the successes of small schools.

282 BILL STEFFEN, Silver Crest School District: Reviews testimony in

support of SB 507 (EXH. M) because small schools have many undeniable advantages over large schools and they shouldn't be destroyed by force.

368 RALPH FISHER, Victor Point Elementary, Silverton: Reviews written testimony in support of SB 507 (EXH. N) because schools should merge only after a plan has been developed and voted on by those affected by the merger and consolidation.
483 > Reads testimony for Don Schellenberg in support of SB 507 (EXH. O).

TAPE 56B

016 MARY LOAR, Black Butte School District, Camp Sherman: Talks about successful students from Black Butte School District and supporting SB 507.

Written testimony submitted from Farmington View School (EXH. P), Victor Point Elementary School (EXH. Q); Sublimity School District (EXH. R); and Black Butte Elementary School (EXH. S).

091 CHAIR HARTUNG: Asks John Danielson from OEA to respond to member questions.

SEN. BAKER: What is the sense from teachers in small remote school districts?

DANIELSON: Talks about advantages of small school districts.
> Some run at lower cost per student and many do not.
> Don't believe it is possible to retain all small school districts in organizational structure that exists today.
> Even with unification of elementary districts, which brings number of school districts down to 173, also going to have to look at consolidation of some K-12 districts.
> Unification does split communities.

181 SEN. BAKER: Talks about the long process of consolidating the North Clackamas School District.
> How do we realistically address special needs and have a safety valve on the program?

DANIELSON: Not sure the number of miles is an important as the safety of the drive.

> Very interested in finding reasonable system of financing schools.
> Equalization is causing many school districts to make drastic cuts.
> Believes existence of Reform Act requires more coordination of format.

264 CHAIR HARTUNG: What effect will yesterday's Supreme Court decision have concerning the lawsuit from 19 school districts?

DANIELSON: The court sustained that the current equalization method used by Legislature is constitutional and the methods of phasing in the equity is probably also constitutional.
> What the Legislature is doing has been validated by the courts for the third time.
> Talks about equalization hearings in the House State and School Finance Committee.
> Success in finding more dollars for schools will determine the equalization process.

409 SEN. GOLD: Do you see a fiscal connection between exempting school districts from unification and costs involved in the equalization process?

DANIELSON: Reviews background on problems with unification and talks about creating an equitable distribution formula for school funding.

480 CHAIR HARTUNG: Adjourns meeting at 10:00 a.m.

Reviewed and submitted by,

Carolynn Gillson
Committee Assistant

EXHIBIT SUMMARY:

A -	SB 467	Sen. Timms	2 pages	
B -	SB 467	Rep. Uherbelau		1 page
C -	SB 507	North Plains Sch. Dist.	4 pages	
D -	SB 507	HarriSB urg H.S.		3 pages
E -	SB 507	Linn Co. Farm Bureau	2 pages	
F -	SB 507	Hamilton Creek Sch Dist	3 pages	
G -	SB 507	Hamilton Creek Sch Dist	3 pages	
H -	SB 507	Lacomb Elementary Sch Dist		1 page
I -	SB 507	Linn Co. Sch. Dist.	2 pages	
J -	SB 507	Sodaville Sch. Dist.	2 pages	
K -	SB 507	Sodaville Sch. Dist.	2 pages	
L -	SB 507	Lourdes Sch. Dist.	4 pages	
M -	SB 507	Silver Crest Sch. Dist.	1 page	
N -	SB 507	Victor Point Elem Sch. Dist.		6 pages
O -	SB 507	Oregon Farm Bureau	1 page	
P -	SB 507	Farmington View School	2 pages	
Q -	SB 507	Victor Point Elem Sch. Dist.		2 pages
R -	SB 507	Sublimity School Dist.		2 pages
S -	SB 507	Black Butte Sch. Dist.		1 page