

## MINUTES OF THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jean Schodorf at 1:35 p.m. on February 20, 2007, in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

Committee members absent:

Committee staff present: Sharon Wenger, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Michele Alishahi, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes  
Shirley Higgins, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Senator Karin Brownlee  
Diane Duffy, Kansas Board of Regents

**SB 315 – Postsecondary educational institutions; costs of course material**

Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes Office, explained that **SB 315** would direct the chief executive officers of each postsecondary educational institution to implement policies and guidelines that would encourage efforts to minimize the cost of course material. The bill provides guidelines to ensure that faculty members consider the least costly practices in assigning course materials, to encourage the adoption of the least expensive addition of books but still maintaining quality educational content, and to work closely with publishers and local book stores to create bundles and packages if that would create cost savings for students. If the faculty member does not intend to use each item in the bundled package, the faculty member would notify the bookstore, and the bookstore would order individualized items. Faculty members would be encouraged to limit their use of new edition textbooks if previous editions do not significantly differ. The establishment of policies would include provisions for a book buy-back program and for the availability of required textbooks to students unable to afford to buy the books. Vendors who contract with the educational institution would be required to post its policies concerning the return of used books and the exchange rate for books used the previous semester that are in good condition.

Senator Karin Brownlee, who requested the introduction of **SB 315**, explained that, when she attended a National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) meeting last year, she noticed that several states were considering legislation that would attempt to reduce the costs incurred by college students for textbooks. She noted that three states have passed bills on the topic. She called attention to two attachments to her written testimony: A publication by the National Association of College Stores entitled, “Where the New Textbook Dollar Goes” and a publication by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) concerning the increase in the price of textbooks in the last two decades. She noted that it was her hope that the bill would begin a serious dialogue with the state’s universities which would result in policies that would provide savings for all Kansas students. (Attachment 1)

Diane Duffy, Vice President, Finance and Administration, Kansas Board of Regents, noted that the Board agreed that it is important to minimized the cost of course materials; therefore, the Board polled faculty members and bookstore managers on their views about **SB 315**. The responses received indicated that efforts to address this concern are currently underway. The Board believes that the effort to bring people together to find new ways to address the cost of textbooks can yield significant benefits. Thus, it is the Board’s hope that legislation will not be necessary. She noted that a task force was formed at the University of Kansas in 2006 to review concerns about textbook planning, cost, and availability, and the Board’s communication with other campuses clearly indicated an awareness of these concerns and an interest in addressing them. In conclusion, she stated that the Board will gladly accept responsibility for ensuring that the K.U. task force’s results are disseminated to all campuses to assist in their efforts to reduce textbook costs. (Attachment 2)

There being no others wishing to testify, the hearing on **SB 315** was closed.

It was the consensus of the Committee to take no action on **SB 315** until a later meeting.

Consideration of bills previously heard:

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE Senate Education Committee at 1:35 p.m. on February 20, 2007, in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

**SB 129 – School safety violations; suspension of driving privileges**

Senator Allen moved to amend SB 129 on page 1, line 29, by inserting “immediately” between “shall” and “suspend”, seconded by Senator Vratil. The motion carried.

Senator Allen moved to recommend SB 129 favorably for passage as amended, seconded by Senator Teichman. The motion carried.

**SB 93 – School districts; high density at-risk pupil weighting; linear transition calculation**

Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes, distributed copies of a balloon of **SB 93** showing revised figures which would result in making the bill revenue neutral (no increase in what was already budgeted). She noted that the figures would be changed to .005533 in school year 2007-08 and .0062 in school year 2008-09 and each school year thereafter. (Attachment 3)

Senator Vratil moved to adopt the balloon amendment, seconded by Senator Allen.

Substitute motion by Senator Lee to adopt the original figure (.006), seconded by Senator Steineger. The substitute motion failed.

On a call for a vote on Senator Vratil’s motion to amend, the motion carried.

Senator Vratil moved to recommend SB 93 favorably for passage as amended, seconded by Senator Apple. The motion carried.

**SB 143 – School districts; procedure to adopt local option budget**

Senator Vratil discussed a proposed balloon amendment he requested that would restore the language in current law requiring the mandatory election when a school district wants to go from a 30 percent to a 31 percent LOB. He reminded the Committee that the language was inadvertently omitted by the revisor. (Attachment 4)

Senator Vratil moved to adopt the proposed amendment, seconded by Senator Allen. The motion carried.

Senator Vratil moved to recommend SB 143 favorably for passage as amended, seconded by Senator Allen. The motion carried.

**SB 142 – School districts; cost of living weighting; comparative wage index**

Senator Vratil distributed copies of a balloon amendment. (Attachment 5) He explained that the amendment phased in the cost of living adjustment over a period of eight years. Noting that the operative portion of the amendment was on the last page of the balloon, he explained that, under the proposed amendment, a school district would be allowed to use only 30 percent of its maximum cost of living adjustment in the first school year, 2007-2008. That would increase by 10 percentage points each year for a period of seven years until school year 2013-2014 when it would be at 90 percent. In 2014-2015, the district would be able to use 100 percent. He explained further that for next year, with a school district being able to use only 30 percent of the cost of living adjustment, a district would get about the same increase as it would get under the current law using the housing index.

Senator Vratil moved to adopt the proposed balloon amendment, seconded by Senator Allen. The motion failed.

Committee discussion followed. No further action was taken on **SB 142**.

**SB 207 – School districts; Mandated attendance of kindergarten; lower age of eligibility to 6**

It was the consensus of the Committee to request an interim study on **SB 207**.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE Senate Education Committee at 1:35 p.m. on February 20, 2007, in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

Attention was turned to the minutes of the February 12, 13, and 14 meetings.

Senator Apple moved to approve the minutes of the February 12,13, and 14 meetings, seconded by Senator Ostmeyer. The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 21, 2007.