

SENATE EDUCATION

EXHIBIT NO. 3

DATE 1-10-05

BILL NO. SB-170

Testimony

SB: 170/ 2005 Session

To: Senate Education Committee

By: Steve Meloy/ Executive Secretary/ Board of Public Education

For the record, my name is Steve Meloy, and I am Executive Secretary of the Board of Public Education. On behalf of the Board, I would like to offer as a proponent, testimony on SB 170. SB 170 is directly related to findings and recommendations of the Montana K-12 Public School Renewal Commission. Specifically, recommendations 2a and 2b recommend greater flexibility in the school calendar and day/hour requirements without reducing the minimum aggregate hours of pupil instruction required by law. This bill would allow local school districts to provide expanded professional development opportunities without adversely affecting classroom teaching.

This bill is but one piece of a comprehensive and holistic package of ideas to be presented to this legislative session as a method to address the complex funding issues facing all of us today. Based on the individual merit of this issue, Senator Mangan was kind enough to carry this concept forward. This concept was not only unanimously endorsed by the Renewal Commission, but it was also supported in concept by the Interim Committee in Education and Local Government. This bill also fits nicely with Senator Ryan's SB 152, which speaks to local control of school districts as found in Article 10, Section 8 of the Montana Constitution.

Again, the Board of Public Education supports SB 170 to be a small part of this body's efforts to define quality. Thank you.