

MINUTES

**MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
59th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION**

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Call to Order: By **CHAIRMAN KATHLEEN GALVIN-HALCRO**, on January 10, 2005 at 3:00 P.M., in Room 137 Capitol.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Rep. Kathleen Galvin-Halcro, Chairman (D)
Rep. Joan Andersen, Vice Chairman (R)
Rep. Gary Branae, Vice Chairman (D)
Rep. Edward B. Butcher (R)
Rep. Margaret H. Campbell (D)
Rep. Tim Dowell (D)
Rep. Wanda Grinde (D)
Rep. Roger Koopman (R)
Rep. Bob Lake (R)
Rep. Joe McKenney (R)
Rep. Holly Raser (D)
Rep. Scott Sales (R)
Rep. Jon Sonju (R)
Rep. Dan Villa (D)
Rep. Jeanne Windham (D)

Members Excused: Rep. John Ward (R)

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Nina Roatch-Barfuss, Committee Secretary
Eddy McClure, Legislative Branch

Please Note. These are summary minutes. Testimony and discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

Committee Business Summary:

Hearing & Date Posted: HB74, 1/5/2005; HB111, 1/5/2005;
HB16, 1/5/2005

Executive Action:

HEARING ON HB 74**Sponsor: REPRESENTATIVE ROSALIE (ROSIE) BUZZAS, HD 93, Missoula****Opening Statement by Sponsor:**

REP. ROSALIE BUZZAS opened the hearing on HB 74, authorizing use of school transportation levy for field trips. The bill allows schools to include, as part of their transportation fund, budgeted curriculum related field trips. It further states that expenditures for field trips are not eligible for county or state reimbursement. Currently districts can establish a funding through permissive local levies to pay for transportation. The Office of Public Instruction (OPI), then reimburses schools for a percentage of the cost of transporting students to and from school. **HB 74** expands the school authority to include curriculum related field trips, but does not allow state or county reimbursement for such expenses. Basically, the cost for curriculum field trips would be funded by the local tax payer, who currently pays into this fund through the permissive levy. Students' ability to apply their classroom learning in a community environment enhances their academic experience. Learning field trips are often limited due to costs. Most districts cannot afford to do them. **HB 74** would give those districts, with that desire, the opportunity to use transportation dollars for curriculum related field trips.

REP. BUZZAS announced that she will offer two amendments. When the bill was put together, language was left out that would require field trip information on bus drivers and licenses, etc. which is requested by OPI. The intent was not to omit this information. It is a matter of safety. The second amendment will deal with schools, such as Billings and Missoula, that transport students within their districts during the regular school day to other facilities within their district. The proposed amendment is necessary to deal with this situation.

Proponents' Testimony:

Dan Martin, Chief Operations Officer, Billings Public Schools, supplied written testimony.

EXHIBIT (edh06a01)

Lynda Brannon, Montana Association of School Business Officials, the School Clerks' Association, said they support the bill. It is timely and will relieve some of the stress on the local districts. The organization would urge immediate passage of the bill so that the funds could be used during the current budget

year and local districts will not have to come in for a budget amendment.

Dave Puyear, Montana Rural Education Association, (MREA), and today representing the **Montana School Board Association,** due to a meeting conflict for their representative said both organizations stand in full support of the bill. This bill focuses on one of the most frustrating problems that superintendents and trustees have in relating to the public. The public does not understand the lack of flexibility in the schools to move dollars where they are needed in school programs.

Erik Burke, Montana Education Association - Montana Federation of Teacher, (MEA-MFT), said the organization strongly supports the bill.

Opponents' Testimony:

Mary Whittinghill, Montana Taxpayers Association, said the organization is not a strong opponent to the bill. It wishes to point out that anytime legislators get into the area where there is a permissive mill levy, in order to fund something for a general fund purpose, they run into situations where higher taxable school districts will be able to utilize this funding more to their advantage than the areas that are struggling presently with the local property tax mills. The organization would like the committee to remember that the solution to the school funding situation, as it moves forward, should be looked at in a total picture perspective in terms of how to get the money to the areas where the district court said you need to get the money appropriated. The organization is afraid that if the committee looks at each money need individually, the money will not get to the children in the school districts that are having a difficult time getting mill levies to pass. Permissive mill levies seem to take on a life of their own once they are allowed.

Informational Testimony: None

Questions from Committee Members and Responses:

REP. KOOPMAN asked Mr. Puyear if he thinks that the better approach would be to begin to remove the kind of state regulations that give local school districts less flexibility and allow the districts to make decisions such as this on a local level. **Mr. Puyear** said that MREA would be in support of the reduction of regulations. MREA realizes that the State Board of Public Education and the Office of Public Instruction have regulations that are there for a reason. But, there are places

where the state can simplify and reduce the incumbrance the districts are faced with.

REP. BUTCHER asked Joan Anderson, OPI, for a picture of what percentage of the transportation funds come from the federal government, the state and local governments and what current restrictions might be affected by this bill. **Ms. Anderson** said the federal money isn't an issue in what is being talked about in the hearing. The funding sources being discussed are state sources, county sources, and local district tax levies. The state and county, in funding transportation for school buses and individualized transportation, each fund approximately ten million dollars. This money is to support what is called the on-schedule costs. The districts produce about twenty million dollars of their own money statewide.

REP. BUTCHER said that he hears from different schools that there is a surplus of money in the fund. He asked if OPI is talking about the bus depreciation fund, or are there two funds. **Ms. Anderson** said there are two funds that are being talked about. The bill addresses the district transportation fund and not the bus depreciation fund. **REP. BUTCHER** then asked Ms. Anderson if there is a surplus in the fund being discussed in terms of the transportation costs and if the bill would also include athletic events and other activities along the same line. **Ms. Anderson** said she does not agree that there is a surplus in the transportation fund. The district, each year, sets a budget to support their busing program and the mileage reimbursement to parents who bring their children to the buses or to school. The district's first line of funding is state and county reimbursements for bus and parent transportation mileage. There are a few revenue sources that are non-levied such as interest. These funds are very small.

Finally, the district figures out how much it needs to tax, in order to fund the entire transportation program just to get the kids to and from school. The fund isn't used for any athletic or extra curricular activities. **REP. BUTCHER** asked if the bill might reduce or maintain the local mill levy and utilize the state dollars more. **Ms. Anderson** answered that what the committee is talking about is not a reduction of the school money or an increase in the state money. The state money is guaranteed to the school on a formula based on the number of miles the school is running its buses, and based on the contracts with the parents. That will not change under this bill. What this bill does is allow school districts to levy additional mills in their transportation fund to support the costs of taking students on field trips. **REP. BUTCHER** asked if, without this bill in place, the local school district would put an item in its regular budget

for field trips. He wanted to know what is to be gained if there are no surpluses and why the district doesn't add this need into its local budget. **Ms. Anderson** said, "Currently field trips have to be done within the general fund budget, and because those budgets are capped, based on the number of kids, the school feels like it cannot increase the budget for the trips." This money is in a separate fund altogether so with a permissive levy the district could increase its transportation budget for the cost of the field trips, thus gaining money in its transportation fund.

REP. ANDERSEN asked **REP. BUZZAS**, "Since this would be a permissive levy on the local tax payers, is there a figure that would be assessed in the districts for the transportation fund throughout the state; and is there a figure available for the money spent on educational field trips?" **REP. BUZZAS** said she doesn't believe that the figure spent is available. There is a different levy amount in each district. The question was deferred to Ms. Anderson from OPI. **Ms. Anderson** reported that OPI does not have a figure. **REP. ANDERSEN** questioned Ms. Anderson, "Is the data available, or is it not available just at this time?" **Ms. Anderson** said that the data, as far as she knows, is not available at OPI. **REP. ANDERSEN** posed the thought that this additional cost would be a permissive levy, levied onto the local tax payers. There would be no county or state funding that would come into the district to defray the costs of the bill. **Ms. Anderson** said that is the way OPI reads the bill.

Closing by Sponsor:

REP. BUZZAS said the bill would meet problems in both large and small districts. She hears that districts do not do educational field trips because they cannot afford them or are very limited financially in what they can do. The bill offers some local control, flexibility to deal with issues before them and provide a quality education for their students. The sponsor said her amendments would be available shortly.

{Tape: 1; Side: A; Comments: Tape: 1; Side: A Completed}

HEARING ON HB 111

Sponsor: REPRESENTATIVE GARY BRANAE, HB 54, Billings

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

REP. BRANAE said **HB 111** has the potential to offer one piece to the solution of the puzzle of education funding. Currently the state school funding formula relies on two factors in determining funding allocations for districts: per ANB and per district

entitlements, both of which are statutorily determined. Declining enrollment leads to less funding and spending authority. According to the current formula, when an elementary student is lost, the district loses \$4,031 in spending authority. The district loses \$5,371 for each high school student lost. Unfortunately, costs don't always shift downward in the proportionate manner required under the law. The per district entitlement is also problematic. It grants a flat amount for every school district in the state, roughly \$19,859 for an elementary district and \$220,646 for a high school district.

The problem is that a district of 10,000 students receives the same district entitlement as a district of 100 students. Both mechanisms were never designed to reflect what it actually costs to educate children in Montana. **HB 111** addresses all of these problems by creating a third funding mechanism: \$1,000 per certified staff. As such, the bill addresses declining enrollments, it addresses adequacy in school funding and it ensures stabilization of the funding system by trying to address fixed costs. No local tax increases are mandated. The bill is funded by state dollars. Investing in schools in this manner represents a tax savings to Montana taxpayers.

Proponents' Testimony:

Linda McCulloch, Superintendent of Public Instruction, said the bill was at the request of OPI. The bill represents the consensus of many educational partners committed to ensuring quality K-12 public education in Montana. By establishing a per educator entitlement, **HB 111** focuses on recruiting and retaining a high quality teaching staff in Montana. It will also recognize that fixed costs remain constant in our schools when there is even a small drop in school enrollment.

Each year Montana needs about 900 new educators to replace those who retire, take positions in other states, or leave education. The eight teacher education programs in Montana graduated about 1,045 students in fiscal year 2002. Only about 29% of those graduates, or about 300 teachers, actually stayed in Montana to teach. This does not meet the needs of Montana schools. Montana schools are not able to compete with the enticing salaries and bonuses offered by other states. For almost a decade student enrollment has declined at an average of 1 1/2%. This is not due to students going to private or home schools. It is due to the decline in the live birth rate.

People are leaving Montana and taking their students with them. Losing a child in a class does not mean the teacher is not needed. The building costs remain the same. Services to the

student remain the same. At present there is no way to counteract the loss of students and still maintain a quality education program. Local schools have had to look at deleting programs, closing schools, or other stop-gap measures. These measures weaken the quality of education.

Dave Puyear, MREA and MSBA said that both organizations which he represents, strongly support the bill. He handed out a written statement by Lance Melton, Executive Director of the Montana School Boards Association.

EXHIBIT (edh06a02)

Dan Martin, Billings Public Schools, said that in the last couple of years the Billings School System has struggled to keep every student in a suitable classroom. The system has had to make many cuts. There are no rabbits left in the hat. They will not be able to offer quality education for another year without help. Montana needs to address problems with the Teacher Retirement System. Montana needs more imagination in this area. The system affects hiring quality teachers.

{Tape: 1; Side: B; Comments: End of tape 1.}

REPRESENTATIVE WARD arrived at the meeting at 3:50 P.M.

Erik Burke, MEA-MFT, said his organization is in support of the bill.

Linda Brannon, MASBO, said her organization supports the bill. She urged a rapid passage of the bill to aid in the preparation of budgets for the school year 2005-2006.

Opponents' Testimony:

Mary Whittinghill, Montana Taxpayers Association, said she does not disagree with any of **REP. BRANAE's** comments. Her organization believes this bill rewards those schools that are the most inefficient and believe there are other ways to address this situation. Promoting consolidation, regionalization of services of some of the counseling, etc. are some answers. Working with a set dollar amount is not going to solve the problems.

Informational Testimony: None

Questions from Committee Members and Responses:

REP. GRINDE had a question for **REP. BRANAE.** She wished to clarify that the dollars in the bill would go to the school

district and not directly to school teachers and the school district would be at its discretion to spend the dollars as it sees fit. **REP. BRANAE** said that is correct.

REP. SONJU asked Superintendent McCulloch if she feels there is a teacher shortage in Montana. **Superintendent McCulloch** said she believes there is. **REP. SONJU** asked how costs go up when enrollment in the school goes down. **Superintendent McCulloch** replied that when a student is lost, the costs usually stay the same. It has nothing to do with the loss of a student here and there. If an entire class was lost, then the teacher and the salary would not be needed. That doesn't happen. Fixed costs stay the same or may rise with inflation.

REP. SALES had a question for **REP. BRANAE**. **REP. SALES** said the 6th assumption on the Fiscal Note for **HB 111** does not agree with **REP. BRANAE**'s remarks. **REP. BRANAE** said his understanding was that, when the Fiscal Note was developed, the writer of the note, on his part determined the sixth assumption was how it could be done. It was used as an example. **REP. SALES** asked if there is a way to get an updated Fiscal Note. **REP. BRANAE** replied, "It is appropriate to ask for a new Fiscal Note."

REP. VILLA asked Ms. Brannon what happens when districts run out of funds since districts are forced to limit their own budgets. **Ms. Brannon** said cuts have to be made. Many school employees have not received an increase in salaries the past few years. Employees are foregoing funds for their own betterment to keep school doors open. All possible costs, have to be cut. Students, parents, and teachers are paying some of the costs. Sometimes costs are moved out of the general fund into another, if the cost fits the definition.

REP. VILLA asked Superintendent McCulloch to walk the committee through a study done in 2000-2002 by the Teacher Certification Board called, "Who Will Teach Montana's Children." **Superintendent McCulloch** reported that there were two studies done through the Board of Public Education. Both had about the same results. Over 70% of graduating teachers leave the state immediately. Often they have degrees in areas that are hard to fill. **REP. VILLA** asked how this bill would impact teacher recruitment and retainment. **Superintendent McCulloch** said it will counteract the declining enrollment. The state has found that about ten years ago the state's share of money that funded the general fund budget in Montana was at about 72%. At that time the Legislature wanted that share to go from 72% to about 80%. Today, that 72% has dropped down to 60%. What has happened at the same time is that when the state share was at 72%, the local taxpayer was paying about 13% of the school general fund

budget. Today with the drop in state funding, the local taxpayer is paying over 30%.

With this increase coming from the state it will increase the 60%, increasing it to a level that would be good for local taxpayers.

REP. KOOPMAN wished to question Superintendent McCulloch. He said he was trying to grasp the rationale of the bill. It appears to him that it changes school funding. He asked for the rationale for the shift in funding, the concept of funding being tied to the number of educators in a school system.

Superintendent McCulloch explained that schools know that because of declining enrollment, the funding system in place at present is not working for the students of Montana. The bill offers an additional way to fund the schools in Montana.

REP. KOOPMAN remarked that it seemed to him that the rationale is to fund the number of educators, therefore maybe the money in the bill should be earmarked to the teachers. He wanted to know why the bill doesn't earmark the money to the instructors.

Superintendent McCulloch responded that teacher salaries are reached at the bargaining table in the local district and she feels the process should remain as such. The Montana Constitution gives control of the local school to the local trustees. **REP. KOOPMAN** requested further explanation as to how the bill impacts school funding. It appears that the bill is challenging the ANB formula. The formula appears to be flawed.

Superintendent McCulloch interprets the bill as a tool for the legislature to give schools in Montana added funding. **REP. KOOPMAN** replied that much has been said about the important need of putting quality teachers in the classroom. He asked the superintendent if she was aware of the studies that say the number one component to a child's education is parental involvement. **Superintendent McCulloch** avowed that parents are the first teacher a child has. A parent places a child in the teacher's hands when a child enrolls in school.

REP. SALES desired to question Superintendent McCulloch. He asked the superintendent to again summarize the problem with the present ANB funding program. **Superintendent McCulloch** reported that the current funding system is not meeting all the needs of the schools in Montana. **REP. SALES** requested evidence of her statement. He said that the press reports that Montana students are doing very well on national testing. **Superintendent McCulloch** theorized that recruitment of teachers is getting more difficult in our state and other states are moving to the top quickly. If Montana does not retain excellent teachers, the test scores the representative is talking about will not stay high

nationally. It is necessary for the state to retain its level of education.

REP. ANDERSEN wished to question Superintendent McCulloch. The committee did not see the fiscal note for the bill until the committee convened. The technical notes on the fiscal note indicate that the fiscal note may be inadequate and that the bill would lead to less equalization between the school districts. Ten years ago there was a law suit that was designed to address equalization among the schools. She asked, "Is the Legislature running the risk of running into that problem again if this bill is made law?"

{Tape: 2; Side: A; Comments: This marks the end of tape 2, side A. }

Superintendent McCulloch replied that the OPI staff is asked to point out all possible contingencies. **REP. ANDERSEN** asked if Superintendent McCulloch suggests that the Education Committee disregard the technical notes. **Superintendent McCulloch** exclaimed that the technical notes are presented for discussion. She said the committee would be well advised to ask the same question of the committee's Legislative Service staff.

REP. BUTCHER requested information from Dave Puyear. The representative quoted Mr. Puyear as saying the bill would not require new taxes. The representative reminded Mr. Puyear that the Fiscal Note calls for close to thirteen million dollars to fund the bill. **Mr. Puyear** reported that the bill doesn't go through the ANB formula and have all the challenges related to that formula. **REP. BUTCHER** stated that Mr. Puyear skated around his question. The dollars for the bill have to come out of taxes and the representative is curious where they will come from. **Mr. Puyear** replied that his perspective is that the money does not come from local taxpayers.

REP. BUTCHER requested the same information from Mr. Melton. **Mr. Melton** reported that there is a fiscal impact with regard to how the bill is funded. The bill would be funded 100% by the state. **REP. BUTCHER** responded that it is all the same taxpayers that will pay the bill. A person pays local and state taxes. **Mr. Melton** said it would be interesting to see the correlation between the property taxes a person pays and the income tax he pays to the State of Montana. He believes there would be a great disparity noted. Until the correlation is studied, Mr. Melton feels it would be an error to suggest that there is a direct correlation. **REP. BUTCHER** had one more question. He summarized again that the same people who own property pay income tax; and the representative doesn't know anyone who isn't doing one or the other. It is his concern that the same guy will pay for the bill at the state level, after paying taxes at the local level. **Mr.**

Melton gave an example of his mother paying property taxes but does not pay state income taxes.

REP. VILLA petitioned information from Mr. Burke. He asked Mr. Burke to expand on teachers not receiving adequate raises, loss of benefits, etc. in recent years. **Mr. Burke** replied that teachers in the state have tapped into their own resources to buy supplies. Educational inflation has nearly doubled over the years over the cost of regular inflation. Teachers are purchasing supplies that the school district was once purchasing. The bill attempts to correct a problem with ANB funding.

REP. VILLA asked **REP. BRANAE**, "Is twelfth place on the SAT nationally good enough for Montana students?" **REP. BRANAE** expounded that nothing less than first place would be appropriate. The state has been able to hold onto test scores to this point but there is evidence that this may not continue and the problem should be addressed now instead of later.

REP. RASER called for information from Mr. Melton. She wished him to elaborate on the taxes coming directly from the state. She asked what the advantage is of the state paying this cost and if people in different areas pay a different number of mills.

Mr. Melton said there is a substantial variation in mills across the state. It is one of the key issues impacted in the present court case. The judge ordered that the Legislature be able to provide (through its funding source) sufficient funds to provide quality at the local level. **REP. RASER** asked what is gained when education is funded at the state level verses funding at the local property tax level. She asked if it is the elimination of the substantial variation in mills throughout the state that vary from district to district. **Mr. Melton** replied that it creates a more equable load across a variety type of taxpayers across the state.

Closing by Sponsor:

REP. BRANAE said that in the four years he has been on the Education Committee he has come to realize how complex the funding formula is and it is something that is very difficult to understand. It is not working as the state would like it to work. It is important that the Legislature address different ways of adequately and equitably funding the educational system. The bill provides another method of simplicity to the process. It is not doing away with the ANB. The ANB formula was derived when the state had increasing enrollments and it worked well at that time. Now the state is at the stage where many school districts have declining enrollments and the formula is not

adequate to present needs. The bill rewards all schools, regardless of size.

At 4:57 P.M. the committee took a ten minute break.

{Tape: 2; Side: B; Comments: This marks the end of side B.}

HEARING ON HB 16

Sponsor: REP. RICK RIPLEY, HD 17

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

REP. RIPLEY summarized the bill as a bill of fairness, not a partisan bill. The bill is by request of the State Tribal Relations Interim Committee. It passed out of the committee unanimous. The bill will increase the per student distribution limit for non-beneficiary students attending tribal community colleges. Non-beneficiary students are non-Indian students who attend tribal community colleges. These colleges only received Federal funds for Indian students up until 1995 when the state started to provide funding for the students through a separate legislative appropriation through the Board of Regents. It has been a mixed bag since that time. A mixed bag is defined as varying amounts, increasing and decreasing during different years. There is a false idea that tribal colleges are private colleges. That is not true. Tribal colleges are federally funded public institutions.

Proponents' Testimony:

SEN. JOHN BRUEGGEMAN, SD 6, emphasized that he is a strong proponent of the bill. It is important to recognize the important role that tribal colleges play in Montana.

REP. CAROL JUNEAU, HD 16, stands in support of the bill. The 1970's was a tremendous time of change for American Indian people. The pendulum swung from BIA control of Indian People and Indian programs to what Indians call the Era of Indian Self Determination. One of the things that came out of that time was tribal colleges. From humble beginnings an entire secondary educational system in Montana has developed. These colleges are a vital part of the tribal economic system. Tribal colleges are a vital part of Montana's economic system. The colleges are open to all students. Tribal colleges receive federal funding to support the Indian students attending the colleges but do not receive money from the federal government for non-Indian students who are attending and benefitting from the classes.

REP. NORMA BIXBY, HD 41, stated that there are two tribal colleges in her district. This bill provides a great opportunity for American Indians that attend the tribal colleges. The education received in the tribal colleges can be transferred to the Montana university system.

Becky Clizbe, Student at Salish Kootenai College, stated that she will graduate in June as a nurse. The school is known for graduating highly trained and highly sought after nurses. Ms. Clizbe believes this is true because of the cultural sensitivity that the diversity of the non-beneficiary students mingled with the beneficiary students has to offer. Two-thirds of her nursing class is composed of non-beneficiary students. The school does offer scholarships. Ms. Clizbe has benefitted from the scholarships.

Joe McDonald, President of Salish Kootenai College, handed out written testimony as a proponent of the bill.

[EXHIBIT \(edh06a03\)](#)

Sheila Stearns, Commissioner of Higher Education, rose in support of the bill. Ms Stearns presented written testimony.

[EXHIBIT \(edh06a04\)](#)

REP. MARGARETT CAMPBELL, presented written testimony in support of the HB 16.

[EXHIBIT \(edh06a05\)](#)

REP. MARGARETT CAMPBELL offered 52 letters from students that attend Fort Peck Community College and a letter from Dr. James Shanley, President of the Fort Peck Community College.

[EXHIBIT \(edh06a06\)](#)

REP. JOEY JAYNE, HD 15, reported that she is in support of the bill.

Bill Wertman, Vice President at Chief Dull Knife College, Lame Deer, Montana, stated that it is important to realize that there is a growing demand for higher education in the state, especially in the areas that are suffering from high unemployment. Higher standards for admission to the state university schools has put an increased emphasis on students getting appropriate developmental course work before being admitted to the university system. Tribal colleges provide that opportunity. This saves the state funds. Tribal colleges, because of their rural location and their lower cost for attendance, are providing increased access for low income Montanans. The No Child Left Behind Act has put increased burdens on all schools. He stated that his school does not actively recruit non-beneficiary students.

{Tape: 3; Side: A; Comments: Tape 3, Side A ended.}

Dana Grant, Salish Kootenai College, reported that he wanted to give one other perspective in support of the bill. He wished to note the impact that tribal colleges have in bringing communities together.

EXHIBIT (edh06a07)

Sherry Breneman, Student at Blackfeet Community College, asks for support of the college as a non-beneficiary student.

David Yarotte, President, Little Big Horn College, stated he is a graduate of Little Big Horn College. Tuition at the college is the same for non-beneficial and beneficial students.

Laura Michel, Non-beneficiary Student at Blackfeet Community College, rose in support of the bill due to rural accessibility and financial costs available.

Tanya Ollinger, Non-beneficiary Student at Blackfeet Community College, said being a single mother of three children and attending the college has been beneficial and affordable. She supports the bill.

Aarie Mad Plume, Student at Blackfeet Community College, President of the Student Body, requested support for the bill. A student is able to receive a GED.

Joshua Brown, Alumni of Salish, Kootenai College and the Univeristy of Montana, is in support of the bill.

Opponents' Testimony: None

Informational Testimony: None

Questions from Committee Members and Responses:

REP. SALES questioned **REP. RIPLEY** as to where the money for the Fiscal Note is going to be found. **REP. RIPLEY** responded that it is in the governor's budget.

REP. KOOPMAN also questioned **REP. RIPLEY** about the money, "Would the money that would be designated for the non-beneficiary students reflect in tuition either for the non-beneficiary or the beneficiary student. Would there be any impact on tuition or would it be a direct benefit to the tribal colleges?" **REP. RIPLEY** said his assumption is that it goes directly to the college, but how it is used, he is not sure.

REP. KOOPMAN referred the question to Dr. McDonald. **Dr. McDonald** reported that in his college it would go directly to the school. With the monies, they would try to keep tuition costs down.

Closing by Sponsor:

REP. RIPLEY asked that the Education Committee pass the bill unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 5:50 P.M.

REP. KATHLEEN GALVIN-HALCRO, Chairman

NINA ROATCH-BARFUSS, Secretary

KG/NR

Additional Exhibits:

EXHIBIT ([edh06aad0.PDF](#))