

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill Number: HB 553a

51st Legislature, 1st Session, 2013

Tracking Number: .192961.2SA

Short Title: Charter Schools Transportation Funding

Sponsor: Representative Roberto “Bobby” J. Gonzales and Others

Analyst: David Craig

Date: March 11, 2013

AS AMENDED

The House Education Committee amendment provides that the different calculation of the transportation allocation for charter schools be applied to those that are chartered after July 1, 2013.

Original Bill Summary:

HB 553 amends the calculation of the transportation allocation in the *Public School Finance Act* to require the Public Education Department (PED) to make an allocation to a state-chartered charter school:

- by including the annual variables of to- and -from school transportation expenditures of the charter school with those of the school district in which the school is geographically located;
- use the combined variables to calculate the allocation;
- remove the charter school’s variables from the current transportation formula; and
- provide funding that equals the difference between the two calculations.

Among its other provisions, the bill requires state-chartered charter schools to:

- be renewed at least once before receiving school transportation funding;
- include student transportation services in its charter; and
- notify the PED one year prior to requesting school transportation funding.

Fiscal Impact:

HB 553 does not contain an appropriation.

Fiscal Issues:

According to the PED analysis:

- state-chartered charter schools are currently eligible to receive transportation funding if their charter reflects that they are going to provide transportation; and
- these schools can receive funding through the formula just like a regular school district;

the chart below indicates that:

- currently there are seven state-chartered charter schools receiving funding through the formula;
- the calculation would allocate \$642,336 to these charter schools; and
- the difference of \$491,259 would be available to all the other school districts through the formula.

CHARTER	FY 13 ALLOCATION	NEW ALLOCATION	DIFFERENCE
ASL Charter School	\$264,359	\$149,559	\$114,800
Cien Aguas	\$83,845	\$22,437	\$61,408
Cottonwood Classical	\$265,091	\$177,243	\$87,848
S.W. AM&SA	\$199,312	\$130,666	\$68,646
S.W. Secondary	\$92,027	\$39,222	\$52,805
Red River Charter	\$91,566	\$77,557	\$14,009
Uplift Charter	\$137,395	\$45,652	\$91,743
	\$1,133,595	\$642,336	\$491,259

Background:

During the 2012 interim, the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) convened a school transportation subcommittee, which included members of the Legislature and other interested parties, such as school administrators and private school bus contractors. The subcommittee met several times during the interim to discuss issues related to school transportation including:

- school bus replacement schedules;
- allocations through the school transportation funding formula; and
- options to deal with high fuel costs, which included alternative funding mechanisms, fuel price forecasting methods, and cost-saving measures.

The issue of state-chartered charter schools receiving school transportation funding formula allocations in excess of what may be needed was raised by PED staff.

Committee Referrals:

HTPWC/HEC/SEC

Related Bills:

- HB 290 *K-3 Plus Program School Buses*
- HB 328a *School Bus Fuel Gross Receipts*
- HB 419aa *School Transportation Reporting Dates*
- *HB 447a *Transportation Emergency Fund*
- HB 532 *School District Liens on Certain School Buses*
- HB 533a *School Transportation Training Fund*
- HB 603 *School District Bus Rental Fee Times*

**CS/*SB 60 Severance Tax Bond Projects*

**SB 160aa Biodiesel Definitions*

SB 576 School Bus GPS Devices