

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE  
BILL ANALYSIS**

**Bill Number:** HB 157

**51st Legislature, 2nd Session, 2014**

**Tracking Number:** .194933.1

**Short Title:** School Transportation Training Fund

**Sponsor(s):** Representative Mimi Stewart

**Analyst:** David Craig

**Date:** February 5, 2014

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**FOR THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE**

**Bill Summary:**

HB 157 proposes to:

- create the School Transportation Training Fund in the State Treasury to be administered by the Public Education Department (PED); and
- provide that the fund consist of payments from school districts and charter schools for public school transportation training workshops and training services to school districts and charter schools, including supplies and professional development for PED staff.

If enacted, the provisions of HB 157 would become effective July 1, 2015 (FY 16).

**Fiscal Impact:**

HB 157 does not contain an appropriation.

**Substantive Issues:**

HB 157 reflects the interim work of the LESC Interim Subcommittee on School Bus Transportation. During the interim, the subcommittee examined school bus transportation data, funding, and safety issues. One item of discussion was potential training for school district and school bus contractors regarding safety and operations issues.

During the November and December 2013 LESC meetings, the committee reviewed the subcommittee's recommendation.

HB 157 is LESC-endorsed legislation for consideration of the 2014 Legislature.

According to the PED analysis:

- the School Transportation Bureau (STB), administers three major programs:
  - the School Bus Driver Instructor Program;
  - the Commercial Drivers License Examiner Program; and
  - the School Bus Inspection Program;

- these programs are required in order to train and test new school bus drivers throughout the state as well as bus inspectors. They are key component in ensuring a safe and qualified driver workforce among districts and charter schools statewide;
- all three of these programs require training to school districts and school bus contractors who want to become certified in each of the respective programs;
- each of these trainings are week-long trainings that occur throughout the year in different regions of the state;
- currently PED charges \$200 per person to attend each of these trainings;
- these funds are used to cover the cost of trainings including equipment, supplies, and travel for STB employees; and
- funds may also be used to pay for professional development of PED employees to ensure the department continues to provide high-quality training to drivers and inspectors.

In addition, the PED analysis states that:

- PED does not have an appropriate fund to deposit fees;
- the PED's external auditors have noted they would like for PED to receive and deposit fees directly; and
- the creation of the fund will provide transparency of the revenues collected from school districts and contractors for providing these trainings as well as transparency of expenditures of these funds.

Finally, the PED analysis cites a 2011 performance audit conducted by the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC). According to PED:

- one of the LFC staff findings was PED's "non-compliance with division statutory duties";
- the report indicated that PED was not conducting sufficient audits at the district level pertaining to school transportation;
- the lack of budget has prohibited the STB in performing sufficient audits; and
- funding generated from conducting training programs may also be used to conduct more field audits.

### **Committee Referrals:**

HEC/HAFC

### **Related Bills:**

HB 97 *School District Liens on Certain School Buses*  
 HB 98 *School Bus Fuel Gross Receipts*  
 HB 112 *School Transportation Info Reporting*  
 HB 156 *Fuel Prices a School Transportation Emergency*  
 HB 158 *School Bus Security & GPS*  
 HB 169 *School Transportation Boundary Agreements*  
 SB 258 *School Transportation & Tribal Leaders*  
 SJM 12a *Study Transporting School Students*