

HB 539 -- TEACHER SALARY INCENTIVES

SPONSOR: Icet

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education by a vote of 10 to 5.

This bill gives school districts the right to include hiring incentives and salary schedule modifications, which can include credit for all prior years of service in another district, to attract and retain teachers. Teachers must be certificated in subject areas that have a demonstrated teacher shortage and must have qualities or credentials that are suited to a district's academic needs. Teachers may be required to teach in the district offering the incentive for up to three years.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2006, FY 2007, and FY 2008.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that school districts need additional ways to attract teachers. Other professions understand the need for additional pay for critical skills. Being able to retain a good teacher is crucial, and the bill would help with retention as well as recruiting.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Icet; Dr. Dan Kercher; Dr. Margaret Anderson; Dr. Tom Mickes; Missouri Association of School Administrators; Cooperating School Districts of Greater St. Louis; Missouri School Administrators Coalition; and Missouri School Boards Association.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that there is too much latitude for districts to use incentives badly or to engage in a bidding war. The teaching profession requires collegiality, and pay differentials can work against collegiality by fostering resentment.

Testifying against the bill was Missouri National Education Association.

Becky DeNeve, Senior Legislative Analyst