

HB 2032 -- TRAVEL HARDSHIPS

SPONSOR: Curtman

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Government Efficiency by a vote of 6 to 4.

This bill changes the law regarding travel hardships. A student is eligible to apply to the Commissioner of Education to attend a school outside his or her district of residence if the student attended a public school in the district of residence during the school year prior to the application, attended a public school outside the district of residence and paid nonresident tuition for the school year prior to the application, or became eligible for kindergarten or first grade.

The commissioner shall assign the student and any siblings to another school district if the driving distance of the shortest route from the student's home to the school in the district of residence is at least 15 miles, the driving distance of the shortest route from the student's home to the school in the receiving district is at least five miles closer, and the student's attendance in the receiving district will not cause the classroom to exceed the number of pupils per class as determined by the receiving district. The hardship assignment will continue until the pupil and any sibling completes his or her course of study. The district of residence will pay tuition to the district the student will attend.

Any hardship assignments granted before this legislation becomes effective will continue until the student and any siblings completes his or her course of study.

This bill is similar to SB 709 (2018).

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that these changes make common sense. The bill puts what is best for the children first, rather than the school district, as it should.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Curtman and Missouri Education Reform Council.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that the family for whom this bill was written have not considered all their remedies.

Testifying against the bill was School Administrators Coalition.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say the opposition to this bill is not just about the money. Kids are missing extracurricular

activities because they are on the bus so long.

Testifying on the bill was David J. Klarich.