

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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STATE OF MAINE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
107TH LEGISLATURE

HOUSE AMENDMENT "D" to H.P. 1437, L.D.
1452, Bill, "AN ACT to Fund Public School
Education."

Amend said Bill in section 35 in that part designated "\$451." by striking out all of the 2nd underlined paragraph and inserting in place thereof the following:

'In addition to the above, a uniform school tax is assessed which shall be determined as follows. The Commissioner of Educational and Cultural Services shall annually, prior to February 15th, certify to the State Director of Property Taxation the total education costs as defined in Title 20, chapter 510.'

Further amend said Bill in section 35 in that part designated "\$451." in the 4th paragraph in the 2nd and 4th lines (2nd and 3rd in L.D.) by striking out the underlined word "Legislature" and inserting in place thereof the underlined words 'Commissioner of Educational and Cultural Services'

Statement of Fact

The Education Committee recommendation that the Governor and the Legislature become involved in the certification of the estimates of the total school costs to be raised by the uniform property tax and from the State General Fund annually is unworkable. The process will create a continuing uncertainty by towns and cities as to whether the State will in fact live up to the commitment to fund 50% of the total costs of education. In addition, the practical facts are that the Legislature will not be in a position in most legislative years to get the necessary 2/3 vote to certify the amount necessary to be raised from the uniform property tax. This means that the Governor, on the Education Committee proposal, will be responsible for the certification. The effect of such action would be to place more power

in the Executive Branch and to leave the communities in the position of not knowing at budget time what the state's share of education costs will be.

This amendment places the certification of the total costs of education back in the hands of the Commissioner of Educational and Cultural Services. The proposed changes in L.D. 1452 make this estimate one which is more certain than under L.D. 1994.

Filed by Mr. Susi of Pittsfield.

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