

MINUTES OF THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jean Schodorf at 1:30 p.m. on March 19, 2008, in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

Committee members absent: Senators Allen, Hensley, and Vratil (excused)

Committee staff present: Sharon Wenger, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Carol Toland, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes Office
Matt Todd, Revisor of Statutes Office
Bev Beam, Substitute Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Representative Sydney Carlin
Ronald Walker, Superintendent, Geary County
School District #475
Martin Dempsey, Department of Defense–State Liaison
Office

HB 2714 - Enacting the interstate compact on educational opportunity for military children

The Chair asked Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes Office, for an overview of **HB 2714**. Ms. Kiernan said the bill was introduced by Rep. Carlin and would enact the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. She said this Compact is intended to remove barriers to educational success imposed on children of military families caused by frequent moves and deployment of their parents and would provide for instant records transfer and facilitate the student placement process. She noted provisions of the bill would apply to children of active members of the military, including those members severely injured and medically discharged and those retired for a period of up to one year after retirement. She said the fiscal note stated it would cost between \$50,000 and \$100,000.

Representative Carlin testified that this Compact seeks to facilitate equal educational opportunity for the children of military members in four major areas, including enrollment, eligibility, placement and graduation. She said the Compact attempts to establish a common denominator among the member states which will remove existing barriers to timely completion of the public education process for students whose parent or parents serve our country. She noted there will be a Commissioner appointed to be a member of the Compact representing the State of Kansas who will be a legislator. The cost should be \$1.00 per student, which is approximately \$19,700 in Kansas; however, if Kansas gets more military students, that will go up. She said that is supposed to cover the cost of attending meetings and conferences and the \$630,000 budget is predicted to include \$.001 per child throughout the country. (Attachment 1)

Ronald Walker, Superintendent of Geary County Schools, testified that the Interstate Compact is an idea proposed by the Council of State Governments, the Department of Defense and supported by the Military Impacted Schools Association and the National Association of Federally Impacted Schools. He said the Compact seeks to provide consistency for dependents of military families as they serve our country. He continued by stating that many military families will have more than twelve documented moves as their children attend grades K-12. These moves, he said, often are from state-to-state within the United States and to countries such as Germany, Japan, and Korea, and these moves are difficult for the entire family, but especially difficult for children. He said Kansas is traditionally is a national leader and strong supporter of those who put their lives on the line in support of our freedom. He noted the fiscal note on **HB 2714** is very small, but the impact for military students is huge. (Attachment 2)

Martin Dempsey, Department of Defense–State Liaison Office, testified that the Compact is an agreement among member states to a set of practices that will allow for the uniform treatment of military children transferring between school districts and between states. He said the Interstate Compact does not ask for special privileges for military children; it only asks that states create a level playing field and work cooperatively to make it happen. He said military children often end up making sacrifices because their parents are serving our country. He noted the language and intent of the Compact will provide consistency for military children as they move from state to state and alleviate some of the hardships they encounter. He

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said both the Secretary of Defense and the Deputy Under Secretary fully support this compact, and they are very excited about the possibilities it offers in improving the quality of life for all military students. (Attachment 3)

Written testimony in support of **HB 2714** was submitted by Keith A. Scott, National Center for Interstate Compacts. (Attachment 4)

Following discussion, Senator Teichman moved to recommend **HB 2714** favorably for passage, seconded by Senator Pine. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 24, 2008.