

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill Number: HB 158

51st Legislature, 2nd Session, 2014

Tracking Number: .194935.2

Short Title: School Bus Security & GPS

Sponsor(s): Representative Mimi Stewart

Analyst: David Craig

Date: February 5, 2014

FOR THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE

Bill Summary:

HB 158 makes an appropriation to the Public Education Department (PED) for expenditure in FY 15 to provide for installation and operation of security and global positioning system (GPS) devices in public school buses.

Fiscal Impact:

\$889,000 is appropriated from the General Fund to PED for expenditure in FY 15. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of FY 15 shall revert to the General Fund.

Substantive Issues:

HB 158 reflects the work of the 2013 LESC Subcommittee on Public School Transportation. During the interim, the subcommittee discussed not only the value of GPS devices for increasing student safety; and providing necessary data for a reevaluation of the school transportation allocation formula, but also the appropriation request during the 2013 legislative session to fund these devices statewide.

During the November and December 2013 interim meetings of the LESC, the full committee considered the subcommittee recommendations for consideration of the 2014 Legislature. Those recommendations included a request that PED provide an updated estimate based on more recent quotes from GPS service providers.

The provisions of HB 158 were endorsed by the LESC during the committee's December interim meeting.

Background:

During the 2012 interim LESC Transportation Subcommittee meetings, members heard testimony from Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) staff regarding the findings of a May 2011 LFC School Bus Transportation Program Evaluation. The program evaluation included findings regarding the expenditure of \$966,400 from a 2007 capital outlay appropriation to purchase a Statewide Public School Bus Global Positioning System that was awarded to Zonar Systems. As

part of its contract with Zonar, PED also purchased the ZPass system, which records student ridership. This system was piloted in Deming Public Schools with plans to expand the pilot to include Albuquerque Public Schools, Las Cruces Public Schools, Rio Rancho Public Schools, and Gallup-McKinley County Public Schools as additional pilots using 2010 General Obligation Bond funds.

The response from PED to the 2011 program evaluation stated that GPS for the state of New Mexico will definitely provide accurate mileage and ridership data which is a fundamental component of the current transportation formula and will require buy-in from the Legislature before the state continues with this service.

Also according to the LFC program evaluation report, there is potential for:

- PED to recapture the annual subscription fee if the data are analyzed and used properly, by:
 - monitoring bus idle time to reduce fuel consumption;
 - reducing administrative costs associated with the need for districts to manually capture and report data; and
 - reducing the amount of time spent verifying ridership while improving security; and
- the GPS-driven system to:
 - significantly increase the division's management of the buses;
 - improve administration of the transportation program;
 - reduce cost; and
 - reduce manpower.

Committee Referrals:

HTPWC/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 157 *School Transportation Training Fund*
HB 158 *School Bus Security & GPS*
HB 169 *School Transportation Boundary Agreements*
SB 258 *School Transportation & Tribal Leaders*
SJM 12a *Study Transporting School Students*