

Comment Report

SSB 1253

A bill for an act relating to state and local government financing, programs, and operations, by modifying provisions relating to mental health and disability services funding, school district funding, commercial and industrial property tax replacement payments, and other specified tax provisions, making appropriations, providing penalties, and including effective date, applicability, and retroactive applicability provisions.(See SF 587.)

Subcommittee Members: Dawson-CH, Bolkcom, Goodwin

Date: 03/24/2021

Time: 08:30 AM

Location: RM 24A

Name: Margaret Buckton

Comment: Both RSAI and UEN are opposed to provisions in SSB 1253 that negatively impact revenue for school districts. The Public Education and Recreation Levy generates over \$3.5 million for 27 school districts that invest in adult and community education. These resources can help immigrant parents learn English, or provide citizens with classes in accounting or understanding taxes. They are often enrichment courses that improve quality of life and connect neighbors to each other. The levy was approved by voters for these purposes in all 27 school districts. At only 13.5 cents per \$1,000, its a small tax rate, but provides a valuable service to school district residence. We appreciate that the bill allows the State Penny to pay for these purposes (which is already does if included in the district's revenue purposes statement), however, those funds are already committed. Further redirection of SAVE revenues to property tax relief enacted in 2019 is already going to provide property tax relief more significant than this small levy. Additionally, through other actions, the bill also lowers the taxable base which will negatively impact Physical Plant and Equipment Levy funds, funds generated to pay off bond issues and reduce capacity for the Instructional Support Levy. We encourage the subcommittee to remove Division IV from the bill if you move the bill forward. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.