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SENATE FILE 249
BY BLACK

(COMPANION TO LSB 1404HH
BY BURNETT)

Passed Senate, Date _____ Passed House, Date _____
Vote: Ayes _____ Nays _____ Vote: Ayes _____ Nays _____
Approved _____

A BILL FOR

1 An Act establishing an environmental education program in the
2 state of Iowa and making an appropriation.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

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S.F. 249

1 Section 1. NEW SECTION. 258B.1 STATEWIDE ENVIRONMENTAL
2 EDUCATION STRATEGY.

3 1. It is in the interest of the citizens of Iowa that a
4 comprehensive environmental education initiative be undertaken
5 that will result in environmentally literate and responsible
6 citizens who will effectively and constructively solve
7 existing environmental problems, prevent new environmental
8 problems, and maintain a sustainable environment for future
9 Iowans. A healthy economy is intimately linked to a healthy
10 environment. The appropriate audiences for environmental
11 education include both formal and nonformal audiences,
12 business, labor, governments, nonprofit entities, and
13 citizens.

14 2. The goal of this initiative is to assure that Iowans
15 are environmentally literate. An environmentally literate
16 citizen is committed to lifelong learning and understands the
17 following:

- 18 a. Basic principles of ecology, sociology, and economics.
- 19 b. The interconnection of all parts of the environment.
- 20 c. The environmental and social costs and benefits of
21 consumer decisions.
- 22 d. Sources of energy, the improving of energy efficiency,
23 and the relationships between energy use and life styles.
- 24 e. The implications of economic and population trends.
- 25 f. The impacts of personal life styles and personal
26 choices.
- 27 g. The importance of acting in a sustainable and
28 constructive manner to protect the quality and diversity of
29 the natural world.

30 3. An environmental education commission, an office of
31 environmental education, a consortium for environmental
32 education, an interagency environmental education committee, a
33 state plan, a curriculum framework, teacher and undergraduate
34 environmental programs, a preschool environmental education
35 program, nonformal environmental education assistance

1 programs, and a finance and grants program shall be
2 established to achieve the goal of accomplishing this
3 initiative.

4 Sec. 2. NEW SECTION. 258B.2 ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION
5 COMMISSION.

6 1. An Iowa environmental education commission is created
7 and attached for administrative purposes to the Iowa
8 department of education. The commission shall identify needs
9 and set priorities for environmental education within the
10 state. The commission shall report to the state board of
11 education, the governor, and the general assembly every two
12 years. The office of environmental education shall staff the
13 commission.

14 The governor shall appoint members of the commission for
15 staggered three-year terms pursuant to sections 69.16, 69.16A,
16 and 69.19. The commission shall be composed of fifteen
17 members and the membership shall include representation from
18 both government and nongovernmental entities and shall consist
19 of one member who has experience in environmental education
20 and represents each of the following entities:

- 21 a. American camping association, Iowa section.
- 22 b. Business community.
- 23 c. Conservation organization.
- 24 d. Elementary teacher.
- 25 e. Farm organization.
- 26 f. Iowa association of county conservation board
27 employees.
- 28 g. Iowa association of naturalists.
- 29 h. Iowa conservation education council.
- 30 i. Iowa state university of science and technology.
- 31 j. Interagency environmental education council.
- 32 k. High school teacher.
- 33 l. Middle school teacher.
- 34 m. Organized labor.
- 35 n. State university of Iowa.

1 o. University of northern Iowa.

2 2. The commission shall provide advice and assistance to
3 the governor, the general assembly, the office of
4 environmental education, the consortium for environmental
5 education, and other state agencies on policies and practices
6 needed to implement environmental education in Iowa. The
7 commission shall provide assistance to and obtain information
8 from the interagency environmental education committee to
9 coordinate the environmental education programs of state
10 agencies.

11 3. The commission shall develop and implement an
12 environmental education grants program. The office of
13 environmental education shall administer the program. The
14 commission shall adopt rules establishing the grant program.
15 Grants under this section shall not be used to replace funding
16 from existing sources.

17 4. The allocation of funds in the environmental education
18 trust fund established in section 258B.11 shall be determined
19 by the commission.

20 Sec. 3. NEW SECTION. 258B.3 OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL
21 EDUCATION.

22 1. An office of environmental education is established and
23 administratively attached to the Iowa department of education.
24 An environmental educator recommended by the environmental
25 education commission to the department of education shall be
26 the full-time supervisor of the office. The office shall be
27 staffed by appropriately trained personnel.

28 2. The office of environmental education shall do all of
29 the following:

30 a. Develop and publish a plan for environmental education
31 with assistance from the interagency environmental education
32 committee and approval of the environmental education
33 commission.

34 b. Assess the status of environmental literacy of the
35 state's students, teachers, and citizens every four years.

1 c. Review the state's plan for environmental education
2 every four years at the direction of the environmental
3 education commission and with the assistance of the
4 interagency environmental education committee, revise the plan
5 as needed, and transmit the plan to the governor and the
6 general assembly.

7 d. Assist the environmental education commission in the
8 administration and valuation of the environmental education
9 grants program.

10 e. Promote and aid in the establishment and evaluation of
11 school environmental education programs for preschool through
12 grade twelve.

13 f. Promote and aid in the development of preservice and
14 inservice environmental education programs for educators
15 through cooperation with groups including, but not limited to,
16 the Iowa conservation education council, Iowa's colleges and
17 universities, and the environmental education consortium.

18 g. Cooperate with federal and state agencies and the
19 private sector in developing, promoting, and evaluating
20 environmental education programs.

21 h. Function as an environmental education clearinghouse by
22 doing all of the following:

23 (1) Reviewing and recommending environmental education
24 materials.

25 (2) Cooperating with state agencies and organizations in
26 the development and distribution of an environmental education
27 newsletter.

28 (3) Establishing an electronic capacity to disseminate
29 data bases of environmental education information and to
30 network with intrastate, interstate, and federal programs.

31 i. Promote the development of cooperative environmental
32 education initiatives with the private sector.

33 j. Facilitate and encourage formal and nonformal
34 environmental education programs; facilitate, encourage, and
35 support multi-school districts' cooperative efforts to assess

1 the need for, develop, and evaluate environmental education
2 curricula, promote state government and private sector policy
3 that is consistent with the environmental education plan
4 established in this legislation, and assist in the
5 coordination of formal and nonformal environmental education
6 with the kindergarten through grade twelve and postsecondary
7 environmental education programs.

8 k. Initiate research on environmental education as called
9 for in the environmental education plan by issuing contracts
10 to organizations, colleges, universities, and other research-
11 based institutions.

12 1. Coordinate environmental education conferences to
13 assist in the dissemination, development, and achievement of
14 the state's environmental education plan.

15 Sec. 4. NEW SECTION. 258B.4 INTERAGENCY ENVIRONMENTAL
16 EDUCATION COMMITTEE.

17 1. An interagency environmental education committee is
18 established. The committee shall be composed of individuals
19 with knowledge in environmental education and the members
20 shall be employees appointed by each agency head. These
21 agencies may include, but are not necessarily limited to, the
22 departments of agriculture and land stewardship, cultural
23 affairs, education, economic development, human services,
24 natural resources, public health, and transportation, the
25 state board of regents, and the attorney general's office.
26 The chair shall be elected by the members.

27 2. Members of the committee shall serve as environmental
28 education coordinators for their respective agencies. They
29 shall direct an assessment of their own agency's target
30 audiences and develop appropriate programs to educate these
31 audiences regarding environmental issues. The committee shall
32 establish subcommittees as needed and assist with the
33 development and implementation of the state's environmental
34 education plan.

35 3. The committee shall develop and maintain a memorandum

1 of understanding to specify methods by which the agencies can
2 share their resources to benefit environmental education in
3 the state.

4 4. The committee shall promote networking, coordination,
5 and cooperation among state agencies, promote the efficient
6 distribution of information, and facilitate the planning and
7 development of educational programs and materials. The
8 department of education is responsible for convening and
9 facilitating the functions of the committee.

10 5. Members of the committee are not eligible to receive
11 any separate compensation and are not eligible for
12 reimbursement of expenses from the committee.

13 Sec. 5. NEW SECTION. 258B.5 IOWA CONSORTIUM FOR
14 ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION.

15 1. A consortium for environmental education is established
16 as a cooperative effort of the three state universities. The
17 consortium shall be staffed by faculty from all three state
18 universities and other interested four-year colleges in Iowa.
19 The consortium shall be administratively attached to the
20 environmental education commission. The purposes of the
21 consortium shall be to do all of the following:

22 a. Provide graduate level and continuing environmental
23 education courses for educators.

24 b. Develop and maintain a resource library for
25 environmental educators that includes curriculum materials,
26 software, and audiovisual materials and work toward electronic
27 access of these materials in the state.

28 c. Provide assistance to schools in the development of
29 their environmental education curricula.

30 d. Coordinate conferences to plan and implement
31 environmental education.

32 e. Aid educators in conducting research on environmental
33 education strategies and developing appropriate student
34 participation in addressing environmental issues.

35 f. Coordinate with local, state, regional, and federal

1 environmental education training centers.

2 g. Administer the office of adult environmental education
3 established under section 258B.6.

4 2. Funding of the consortium shall be pursuant to an
5 annual appropriation made by the general assembly to finance
6 the staff, travel, and supplies necessary to carry out these
7 functions and to support a grant program for research in
8 environmental education.

9 Sec. 6. NEW SECTION. 258B.6 OFFICE OF ADULT
10 ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION.

11 1. An office of adult environmental education shall be
12 established and staffed by the consortium for environmental
13 education. The office for adult environmental education shall
14 be responsible for developing, coordinating, implementing, and
15 evaluating environmental education programs for a wide variety
16 of adult audiences in Iowa.

17 2. The responsibilities of the office of adult
18 environmental education shall include, but not be limited to:

19 a. Quadrennial assessment of the status of environmental
20 literacy, responsibility, and stewardship among adult Iowans.

21 b. Assessment of the effectiveness of adult programs of
22 environmental and conservation education which are currently
23 available.

24 c. Development and implementation of a strategy for
25 providing environmental education programs for adult audiences
26 in Iowa.

27 d. Service as a clearinghouse and coordinating agency to
28 assist in unifying educational efforts and provide
29 environmental education resources for existing groups.

30 e. Coordination of the use of public and private funding
31 partnerships to encourage cooperative environmental education
32 efforts among groups with similar goals and to improve the
33 distribution and dissemination of environmental educational
34 materials.

35 f. Administration of a grant program which shall fund

1 environmental education programs for targeted adult audiences.
2 g. Development of an electronic database for current and
3 locally specific information on the environment, natural
4 resources, and environmental education programs and materials.

5 Sec. 7. NEW SECTION. 258B.7 GRANTS PROGRAM.

6 The environmental education commission shall award grants
7 annually to organizations, agencies, institutions, and
8 individuals for the development, dissemination, and evaluation
9 of environmental education programs. Proposals addressing
10 needs and priorities identified by the commission or included
11 in the state plan for environmental education shall receive
12 priority. The staff of the office of environmental education
13 shall administer the grants program and develop an evaluation
14 plan. The environmental education commission shall adopt
15 rules establishing specific criteria and guidelines for the
16 grants program. An annual appropriation shall be provided to
17 fund the grants program.

18 Sec. 8. NEW SECTION. 258B.8 UNDERGRADUATE ENVIRONMENTAL
19 EDUCATION -- GRANTS PROGRAM.

20 A grant program is established to enable the development
21 and implementation of an environmental issues course at
22 postsecondary institutions of higher education. Grants shall
23 be available only to those institutions which will implement
24 the course across all curricula as a requirement for all
25 undergraduate students, regardless of major. The grant
26 program shall be administered according to criteria and
27 guidelines established by the environmental education
28 commission and shall be awarded by the office of environmental
29 education.

30 Sec. 9. NEW SECTION. 258B.9 ASSISTANCE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL
31 EDUCATION.

32 1. The goal of providing financial assistance for
33 environmental education shall be to provide a minimum of one
34 environmental education staff person for every three to four
35 thousand pupils in grades kindergarten through grade twelve in

1 a county.

2 2. Financial assistance shall be provided to county
3 conservation boards to support the hiring of professional
4 environmental educators to assist schools and nonformal
5 education sectors in planning and leading environmental
6 education programs. The financial assistance shall be used to
7 provide staff and equipment for these programs and shall not
8 be used for the construction or maintenance of parks,
9 buildings, or other physical facilities. The financial
10 assistance shall not replace existing county moneys budgeted
11 for environmental education. Financial assistance shall be
12 provided as follows:

13 a. Ten thousand one hundred dollars shall be allocated to
14 each county, regardless of population. One million one
15 hundred thousand dollars shall be divided among eligible
16 counties on a population-based formula detailed in paragraphs
17 "b" through "d".

18 b. A county shall be declared eligible if the county
19 submits certification that the county will do both of the
20 following:

21 (1) Provide county funding or support equivalent to one
22 cent per thousand dollars of the assessed value of taxable
23 property in the county or thirty-five thousand dollars,
24 whichever is less, according to a formula outlined in
25 paragraph "c", for environmental education.

26 (2) Explain how the financial assistance will be spent for
27 environmental education.

28 c. In order to meet county funding or support
29 requirements, county conservation boards may include the
30 dollar equivalent of the following county support:

31 (1) Salaries and benefits for all full-time and part-time
32 naturalists, environmental education coordinators,
33 environmental program specialists, and other positions whose
34 responsibilities lie solely within the county conservation
35 board's environmental education program.

1 (2) For staff positions involving some responsibilities
2 outside the environmental education program, such as a ranger,
3 a percentage of the salary and benefits equal to that portion
4 of time devoted specifically to the environmental education
5 program.

6 (3) Operation and maintenance, but not purchase, of a
7 county vehicle designated to be used specifically by the
8 environmental education program staff.

9 (4) Funds budgeted specifically for the environmental
10 education program, including, but not limited to: program
11 supplies, office supplies, telephone and communications,
12 uniforms, newsletters and other public relations tools,
13 publicity, library and resource materials, printing or
14 purchase of environmental and conservation education resource
15 materials, travel, and professional development workshops and
16 conferences.

17 The costs of construction or maintenance of parks,
18 buildings or any physical facilities shall specifically not be
19 used to meet the county funding or support requirements.

20 d. Counties declared eligible shall receive financial
21 assistance under this section according to the following
22 formula: official population figure of the county according
23 to the most recent federal decennial census times forty cents.

24 e. In order to fulfill the county funding or support
25 requirements of this section, county conservation boards may
26 contract with private nature centers, camps, or other private
27 or public entities to provide these environmental education
28 services. The boards shall submit an annual report to the
29 office of environmental education demonstrating and certifying
30 the proper use of these funds.

31 f. The focus of this financial assistance shall be, but is
32 not limited to: helping teachers, group leaders, and other
33 environmental educators to plan, develop, and implement
34 environmental education programs, including leading outdoor
35 environmental education classes for all ages and for both

1 formal and nonformal educational groups; providing program
2 resources such as environmental education activity guides and
3 curricula, learning kits, audiovisual materials, literature,
4 and equipment; and interpreting Iowa's natural and cultural
5 resources and how to use them wisely.

6 3. Financial assistance of three hundred thousand dollars
7 shall be provided to the Iowa department of natural resources
8 to provide interpretation of Iowa's natural resources and
9 assistance in planning and leading programs in environmental
10 education for nonformal education entities and schools.

11 a. Financial assistance shall be provided to the parks and
12 preserves division of the department of natural resources for
13 one full-time statewide coordinator and a full-time
14 interpreter or environmental educator in each of the four park
15 districts in the state.

16 b. Financial assistance shall be provided for needed
17 equipment, travel, printing, and supplies for each of these
18 educators.

19 c. The department of natural resources may contract with
20 private nature centers, camps, or other private or public
21 entities to provide these environmental education services.

22 Sec. 10. NEW SECTION. 258B.10 RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL
23 EDUCATION PROGRAMS.

24 1. A residential environmental education program is
25 created to recognize the critical role that both direct
26 experience with the outdoors and the important role that a
27 several day residential experience away from home and the
28 formal school environment play in the formation of an
29 environmentally literate citizenry.

30 2. Phase I of the program shall provide supplemental
31 funding of thirty-five dollars per pupil to school districts
32 that choose to provide for the attendance of the pupils in one
33 grade level at a certified residential environmental education
34 center. To receive this funding, school districts must
35 provide proof of attendance by their pupils at such a center

1 and participation by pupils in a certified program for a
2 minimum of three consecutive days for each pupil. Local
3 school districts shall choose the grade level and the time of
4 year they feel is most developmentally appropriate for this
5 residential experience.

6 3. Phase II of the program shall consist of all of the
7 following:

8 a. Development of certification criteria for facilities,
9 staff, and programs.

10 b. Census of existing facilities, staff, and programs
11 relative to the certification criteria.

12 c. Assessment of the needs of these facilities.

13 4. The program shall be administered by the office of
14 environmental education.

15 Sec. 11. NEW SECTION. 258B.11 ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION
16 TRUST FUND.

17 A separate environmental education trust fund is created in
18 the state treasury under the control of the environmental
19 education commission. All moneys appropriated or otherwise
20 credited to the fund and the interest the moneys accrue are
21 appropriated to the environmental education commission to
22 accomplish the purposes of this chapter. All moneys in the
23 fund shall only be used for environmental education. The
24 environmental education commission shall develop a plan for
25 the expenditure of moneys in the fund. Notwithstanding
26 section 8.33, moneys remaining in the fund at the end of any
27 fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund of the state.

28 Sec. 12. Section 272.25, Code 1995, is amended by adding
29 the following new subsection:

30 NEW SUBSECTION. 6A. A requirement that practitioner
31 preparation students receive instruction to acquire the
32 content and teaching skills necessary to effectively instruct
33 pupils in preschool through grade twelve in the principles of
34 environmental education, including instruction in ecological
35 concepts, environmental issues and problems, developmentally

1 appropriate methods, and use of a variety of instructional
2 curriculum models and materials.

3 Sec. 13. NEW SECTION. 272.35 CONTINUING EDUCATION --
4 KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE TWELVE TEACHERS.

5 The board shall adopt rules to provide for staff
6 development training incorporating environmental education
7 proficiencies pursuant to section 272.25, subsection 6A, for
8 an initial applicant for licensure or an applicant for renewal
9 who has not completed a course providing environmental
10 education proficiencies or an equivalent.

11 Sec. 14. APPROPRIATION. There is appropriated from the
12 general fund of the state to the environmental education trust
13 fund for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1995, and ending
14 June 30, 1996, the following amount to be used for the
15 purposes outlined in chapter 258B:

16 \$ 5,800,000

17 EXPLANATION

18 This bill establishes an environmental education strategy
19 for the state of Iowa. An environmental education commission
20 is established in the department of education. The governor
21 is to appoint 15 members to the commission from designated
22 entities.

23 The bill also establishes a state office of environmental
24 education for all of Iowa's citizens from preschoolers to
25 adults. The office is administratively attached to the
26 department of education to establish and coordinate a plan for
27 the state. The office is to serve as a clearinghouse, a
28 database headquarters, and to coordinate with federal and
29 state agencies, and the private sector in developing and
30 implementing environmental education strategies. A grants
31 program is also established to be administered by the office
32 of environmental education. A program for adult environmental
33 education is established within the office of environmental
34 education.

35 An interagency environmental education committee is

1 established to coordinate efforts among state agencies to
2 promote and assist in providing environmental education
3 programs in the state.

4 The Iowa consortium for environmental education is created
5 to be a cooperative venture of the three state universities
6 and other interested four-year private colleges. The
7 consortium is responsible for the development of curriculum
8 including undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education
9 courses for educators, and for the maintenance of a resource
10 library.

11 The bill requires that students preparing to become
12 educators be able to demonstrate competencies in environmental
13 studies and that staff development courses be established for
14 existing educators to acquire the same competencies. The bill
15 also provides for grant moneys to undergraduate institutions
16 to develop a course on environmental issues that would be
17 required for all undergraduate students at some colleges and
18 universities.

19 A funding program is established for county conservation
20 boards, including a formula to determine eligibility of each
21 county board. The Iowa department of natural resources is
22 also provided funding for the parks and preserves division.

23 The bill also provides for reimbursements of \$35 to a
24 school district per public school pupil who spends three
25 consecutive days at a certified residential environmental
26 education center.

27 The bill creates a separate environmental education trust
28 fund within the state treasury and provides for an
29 appropriation of \$5,800,000 to the department of education for
30 the environmental education trust fund for the fiscal year
31 beginning July 1, 1995, and ending June 30, 1996.

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