

Legislation Text

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Calling upon the School District of Philadelphia Board of Education to establish a student transportation cost policy to address the current financial needs of the student population in Philadelphia.

WHEREAS, The School District of Philadelphia is projected to purchase approximately \$15.4 million in tokens and transfers from the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) during the current school year; and

WHEREAS, The School District currently provides free tokens and free transfers to approximately 10,575 public school students, including middle and high school students attending a desegregation school and travelling more than one mile from home, and special education students when public transportation is noted on their Individualized Education Plan; and

WHEREAS, The School District pays SEPTA \$1.15 per token for a budgeted cost of \$4.5 million for Fiscal Year 2001 and 40 cents per transfer for a budgeted cost of \$830,000; and

WHEREAS, Total payments to SEPTA for free tokens and transfers for public school students \$5.3 million of which 67 percent is reimbursed by the Commonwealth, resulting in a net cost to the School District of \$1.75 million; and

WHEREAS, The School District currently provides subsidized token and free transfers to 12,984 public school students; and

WHEREAS, The School District pays SEPTA \$1.15 per token with 90 cents paid for by students and 25 cents paid for by the School District, for a budgeted cost of \$1.2 million for Fiscal Year 2001 and 40 cents per transfer for a budgeted cost of \$1 million; and

WHEREAS, Total payments to SEPTA for subsidized tokens and free transfers for public school students are \$2.2 million of which 67 percent is reimbursed by the Commonwealth, resulting in a net cost to the School District of \$720,000; and

WHEREAS, The net cost to the School District for providing free and reduced tokens for public school tokens is currently budgeted to be close to \$2.5 million; and

WHEREAS, For each additional 5 cents of subsidy by the School District on subsidized tokens, the increase in net cost, after reimbursement, would be approximately \$150,000; and

WHEREAS, The cost of providing free transfers is \$1.8 million, or \$610,00 after reimbursement; and

WHEREAS, In a February 21, 2001 letter to the Council of the City of Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Student Union and Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth called upon Council to reduce the cost of transportation for Philadelphia Public School Students; and

WHEREAS, In testimony before Council, Philadelphia Student Union members Tara Colston, Day Augustine, Ebony Jones and Jeremy Kaplan all testified that transportation costs represent an onerous financial burden to students, potentially interfering with their ability to get to and from school; now therefore

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That Council calls for the School District of Philadelphia Board of Education to establish a student transportation cost policy to address the current financial needs of the student population in Philadelphia.