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MISSOURI STATE SENATE — 1st DISTRICT

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Kennedy Sponsors Bill to Ensure Schools Don't Lose Funds

Legislation would phase in 'Prop C' change, keep formula promise of more money

JEFFERSON CITY—State Sen. Harry Kennedy, D-St. Louis, introduced legislation today that would phase in a change in the funding received by local schools. “Prop C” money, collected through a half-cent local sales tax, goes to the state and in turn is distributed to local schools. Senate Bill 287, which was passed last year and will go into effect July 1, will enact a new method of distribution and cause many schools to receive significantly less funding. Kennedy’s bill would allow for a smooth transition to this method, and no school would receive less Prop C funding than they currently receive.

“It’s common sense to phase in a change that has such a drastic impact for our schools,” Kennedy said. “Under my proposal, schools would not get less than they currently receive, and they would have time to plan their budgets accordingly.”

If left unchanged, Senate Bill 287 will immediately change the factors determining the amount of Prop C funding each district receives. Currently, the distribution is based on districts’ average daily attendance plus double the average daily summer school attendance. After July 1, the distribution will be based on a weighted average daily attendance that includes a weight for disadvantaged students.

“It’s important that we move toward a student-need-based formula,” Kennedy said. “We’re phasing in every other aspect of Senate Bill 287 to avoid the type of adverse effect schools will face from the Prop C change, so phasing it in is consistent with the goals of the formula.”

Formula simulations provided to legislators prior to voting on Senate Bill 287 did not reflect the change in Prop C money for each district, and therefore lawmakers were unable to foresee the true impact of the legislation.

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