

SBE Statement on Proposed Senate Budget

The recently released Senate proposed budget is an improvement upon the House's proposal, preventing further reductions to K-12 and higher education. Perhaps most importantly, it heeds the findings of the *McCleary* case – responding directly to the Supreme Court's call for implementation of the provisions of SHB 2776 by adding \$32 million for K-3 class size reductions in our state's highest poverty schools.

The additional revenue comes in the context of a \$330 million apportionment delay to districts. Although the apportionment delay is not ideal, there does not appear to be other acceptable options on the table that can be implemented in a short supplemental budget session. The K-12 and higher education system cannot sustain further reductions without detrimental impact to our students.

Clearly, we have a long way to go, but the Senate proposal is a solid start. The Senate's proposed budget still leaves us far short of our objective of full funding, but addressing those shortfalls entirely in a supplemental budget package is not plausible. Under the circumstances, the Senate has done much to send a "good faith" message to the Court and to schools, protecting students from further cuts and adding revenue to advance on a reasonable and attainable course towards the implementation of SHB 2776.



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Chair