



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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“Cool Schools” receives final Legislative vote *HB 2960 on the way to the Governor’s desk*

SALEM – The Oregon Senate took final legislative action this afternoon on a bill that will promote energy efficiency and weatherization upgrades at Oregon schools, saving valuable education dollars that would otherwise go to utility bills, and creating jobs in school districts across Oregon. House Bill 2960, commonly referred to as the “Cool Schools” bill, passed the Senate unanimously is now on its way to the Governor.

“This legislation is a win-win for Oregon that will help reduce utility costs, upgrade aging facilities, improve the learning environment for our kids, and create much-needed jobs across Oregon,” said Senate Majority Leader Diane Rosenbaum (D-Portland), a chief sponsor of the bill. “This type of innovative and fiscally responsible program is exactly the sort of investment we should be making to get our economy moving while improving the life of our schools.”

HB 2960 establishes the Clean Energy Deployment Program within the Oregon Department of Energy to provide grants and loans over a period of four years to school districts that apply for help with clean energy and energy efficiency projects. Participating school districts may finance projects to weatherize, upgrade, and retrofit K-12 public schools as well as to retrofit or replace school bus fleets to improve their fuel efficiency.

“House Bill 2960 is a perfect example of bipartisanship at its finest,” said Senator Chris Edwards (D-Eugene), also a Senate chief sponsor of the bill. “Cool Schools is a win-win for all. Not only will this bill help improve the health and safety of our children while in school, it creates much needed jobs for Oregon. I am proud of the work we have accomplished with this bill and was honored to work with the dozens of teachers, business leaders, labor organizations and conservation groups that played a key role in its development.”

HB 2960 also requires the Public Utility Commission to prepare a report by the end of 2012 on the feasibility of energy efficiency power purchase agreements, the cost effectiveness of energy efficiency investments, the potential avoided costs to ratepayers, and the most effective means of maximizing energy efficiency. The bill also requires that at a minimum, projects must receive LEED Silver certification, a two globes rating from the Green Globes program, or an equivalent or higher rating as determined by ODOE.

“This bill represents the work of dozens of advocates, hundreds of hours, and many good ideas for how to

get Oregonians working while improving schools for our kids,” said Senator Jackie Dingfelder (D-Portland), chair of the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee. “These projects are smart investments that will pay off for years to come while helping get people to work immediately this summer.”

HB 2960 is a major priority of Governor John Kitzhaber and will take effect immediately with the Governor’s signature.

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