

SB 2 SAM Testimony 11-13-17 S Fin & H Appro

13-Nov-17	3:00 PM	317	SB 2	Revise laws related to school funding block grants and reimbursements	Duane Ankney (R) SD 20	Proponent
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Proponent

Thank you Senator Ankney for carrying this school funding bill.

SAM's advocacy platform has established key priorities, one of which is School Funding Equity and Adequacy. In keeping with this priority, we support SB 2. This bill provides K12 assistance for the statewide revenue shortfall while preserving the constitutionality of the school funding formula.

Support is difficult, and not without careful discerning of the impact on our K12 schools. The impact affects schools differently statewide because it involves budgets and taxes...

- The 20,000 foot view reveals that the bill provisions will allow local school districts flexibility to transfer from any budgeted or non-budgeted fund (except debt service and retirement funds) and reserves to meet the district's budget authority (needs), which is left in place in the bill. At 20,000 feet there is enough fund authority statewide to cover.
- The bill upholds local control, so important to Montana schools.
- Allows districts the best chance for figuring out what is necessary for their individual schools.
- You should know, each of the school districts in your legislative districts will be impacted in different ways by this bill, and that is challenging, but also demonstrates a great effort by our K12 schools to help resolve the revenue shortage, without reducing budget authority or harming the school funding formula.

SAM's Core Value of Leadership, Professionalism and Integrity is in full force in this recommendation ...

- K12 schools stepping forward in offering a part of the solution to the state budget shortfall, and in turn helping to minimize the cuts necessary to critical Montana programs, including schools.
- Doing so while preserving the school funding formula (budget authority) with local control flexibility.

Testimony delivered by Kirk Miller on 11/13/17 in the Joint Senate Finance/Claims and House Appropriations Committee.