

Legislature - First Session - 2019

Introducer's Statement of Intent

LB676

Chairperson: Senator Mike Groene

Committee: Education

Date of Hearing: March 25, 2019

The following constitutes the reasons for this bill and the purposes which are sought to be accomplished thereby:

LB 676 integrates the petition method of reorganizing school districts into the Reorganization of School Districts Act. In doing so, provisions of the Reorganization of School Districts Act are clarified, but changes to policy are also proposed. Such changes primarily include:

- Changing the percentage of legal voters that must support a petition in order for a petition to be submitted to the State Committee from 60% to 50%;
- Permitting voters to submit a plan for reorganization to the State Committee if the plan is proposed by twenty-five percent of voters in the district;
- Granting the State Committee discretion to review all petitions;
- Granting the State Committee authority to review petitions, regardless of the result of a bond election;
- Disallowing names to be added to or withdrawn from a petition after the petition is filed with the State Committee by changing the deadline to the time of filing such petition;
- Removing the Commissioner of Education as a member of the State Committee (the Commissioner is currently an ex officio, nonvoting member);
- Requiring the State Committee to also consider instruction costs when reviewing plans or petitions; and
- Changing the notice requirements when a parcel of land is not attached to any district from notice by certified mail to voters residing on the parcel and to the school boards and by publication in a newspaper to only notice by publication in a newspaper.

LB 676 also changes which calculation is relied on to determine the amount of students in Class III school districts for the purposes of determining whether the school must dissolve or develop cooperative programs with other schools from the average daily membership or the fall school district membership to only the fall school district membership.

The bill repeals Neb. Rev. Stat. §§ 79-470 and 79-598. Such statutes permit school districts to contract with other school districts for the instruction of students and require or permit dissolution of school districts in certain circumstances.

Principal Introducer: _____

Senator Mike Groene