

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Subject: One-year Moratorium on School Building Projects in Small School Districts

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Overview

Minnesota Statutes require the commissioner of education to conduct a review and comment on any school building project with an estimated cost of \$250,000 or higher. Under current law regarding the review and comment process, the commissioner may grant a school building project a positive, unfavorable, or negative review. If the commissioner grants the district a positive review, the district may continue with its plans. If the district receives a negative review and comment from the commissioner, the district is prohibited from proceeding with its plans. If the commissioner issues an unfavorable review and comment, the district must reconsider its plans, and if the district decides to proceed, the district must receive at least 60 percent yes votes on the bond sale authorization election. It is uncommon for the commissioner of education to issue anything other than a positive review and comment for school construction plans.

This bill places a one-year moratorium on school construction projects for school districts that serve less than 500 students.

Section

- 1 One-year moratorium; small school building projects.** Defines a small school district as one that serves fewer than 500 students. Prohibits the commissioner of education from issuing a positive or unfavorable review and comment on any school construction project for a small school district for the following year. Prohibits a small school district from selling or issuing bonds for building projects for one year from the effective date of this act. Exempts any school district that receives state bond money from the 2006 bonding bill from

Section

this prohibition. Requires the commissioner of education to study the condition of and need for school buildings in small school districts and report findings to the 2007 Legislature.