

AGENDA**ASSEMBLY BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE NO. 2
ON EDUCATION FINANCE****Assembly Member Julia Brownley, Chair****TUESDAY, MAY 8, 2007
STATE CAPITOL, ROOM 444
10:00 AM**

ITEMS TO BE HEARD

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ITEMS TO BE HEARD

6110 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

ISSUE 1: INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The issues for the subcommittee to consider are:

- The Governor's proposed funding level for instructional materials.
- A report by LAO on the cost of instructional materials in California compared to other states.
- A state operations proposal in an April DOF letter related to CDE's administration of the adoption process for instructional materials.
- A legislative proposal to fund a pilot program to make instructional materials for English learners available.

BACKGROUND:

Governor's budget. The Governor's budget proposes a total funding level of \$418 million for the state's instructional materials block grant, a slight (\$15 million) increase over last year's funding level of \$403 million. The increase reflects the net effect of a slightly downward adjustment for declining growth statewide (as the Governor proposes for other categorical programs) and an increase to reflect the January 10 estimate of the statewide K-12 COLA rate. The Governor's budget also reflects the availability of approximately \$1 billion in state lottery funds, a portion of which must be spent on instructional materials. According to the California Budget Project, in 2005-06, public schools received approximately \$157 per student from the lottery. A 2003 CDE survey showed that between 1986-87 and 2001-02, school districts spent an average of about 80% of these funds on salaries and benefits, and about 8.3% on books and supplies. Proposition 20, passed by the voters in 2000, requires school districts and community colleges to spend 50% of the growth in lottery funds on instructional materials.

April DOF letter. In an April DOF letter to the Legislature, the administration proposes a \$75,000 increase to CDE to enable them to contract with content experts to review instructional materials for the upcoming Reading/Language Arts adoption in 2008. DOF indicates that the proposed funding source is federal Title III funds, which are provided by the federal government for states to address the instructional needs of English learners. DOF also indicates that it proposes the \$75,000 as half-year costs for 2007-08, and intends to propose another \$75,000 increase in next year's budget for the 2008-09, for a total increase of \$150,000. In addition, the administration proposes the following provisional language explicitly authorizing the use of the funds pursuant to pending legislation needed to explicitly authorize the current practice of using volunteer scholars to assist in addressing content review workload.

X. Of the amount appropriated in this item, \$75,000 of Title III funds is available for consulting and professional services workload necessary for content review workload, pursuant to pending, enabling legislation.

Background on Program. The instructional materials block grant provides funds to districts to purchase standards-aligned materials, which the State Board adopts every six years for use in grades K-8 in the following areas: 1) Reading/ Language Arts, 2) Mathematics, 3) Science, 4) Social Science, and 5) Bilingual or bicultural subjects. School districts that utilize the instructional materials block grant funds are required to purchase these adopted materials (as well as locally adopted materials for grades 9-12) for every student within 24 months after adoption by the State Board. While state law permits districts to use the state funds for uses other than to purchase state-adopted materials (such as purchasing supplemental materials or technology, purchasing tests, providing in-service training on the materials, or purchasing library materials), districts may only do so after they have purchased SBE-adopted materials. Districts argue that this flexibility in the use of the funding is essentially non-existent because the cost of the instructional materials is so high that they use up all their state funding on purchasing the SBE-adopted materials, and then have nothing from the state program to purchase supplemental materials.

The State Board is currently working on an upcoming adoption of new materials for Reading/Language Arts. It has already approved criteria for the new adoption, after which time publishers will either custom-make materials to the criteria or submit already-existing materials for adoption. The State Board states that it will provide publishers 30 months to submit the materials for its consideration, after which time it will approve a new list of materials, which districts will then have two years to purchase.

COMMENTS:

Questions and Concerns about the state instructional materials program. In recent years, the Legislature has heard school districts, individuals, statewide education associations and researchers raise questions about the state instructional materials program. Specifically, questions have been raised about whether the current process for adopting standards-aligned materials (which districts are required to purchase) provides enough options for school districts, particularly for the needs of English learners students and special education students. These students often need supplemental materials designed specifically for their learning needs. (There are 1.6 million English learners enrolled in California schools, and approximately 10% of the total K-12 population have been identified as special education.) Also, some districts and individuals highlight the fact that the State Board does not provide enough options for districts to choose from, since it routinely adopts fewer than five options for each primary adoption of a subject. (For example, in the last primary adoption for English/language arts materials, the State Board adopted materials from just two publishers.) Some local school districts argue that the lack of selection hinders their ability to choose materials that best meet local priorities and needs. They also argue that the lack of selection is symptomatic of a top-down approach, in which the state not

only dictates the level of achievement that districts must aim for, but it also dictates *how* districts must teach their students to meet these goals. In recent years, the LAO and other researchers have cautioned the state against this type of micro-managing regarding how districts do their job.

Staff notes that the state invests approximately \$600 million a year for programs whose success is linked to the effectiveness of the State Board-adopted instructional materials. These programs include the state Instructional Materials Block Grant, as well as staff development programs designed to train teachers on the proper use of these materials. These programs are summarized below. In addition, when a school is identified as "program improvement" under the federal No Child Left Behind Act, based on a school's failure to meet progress on state tests, the state encourages more intensive use of the State Board-adopted instructional materials as part of its focus on the "nine essential elements" of school improvement.

Programs related to the State Board-adopted instructional materials

Program	Proposed funding level for 2007-08	Funding source
Instructional Materials block grant	\$418 million	State (Prop. 98)
Reading First	\$159 million	Federal
Math and Reading Professional Development Programs (not including funding for teachers of English learners)	\$32 million	State (Prop. 98)
Total	\$609 million	

Last year's supplemental report language related to the cost of instructional materials in California. Last year, the subcommittee heard testimony about the growing costs of state-adopted, standards-aligned instructional materials in California, and the cost pressure this presents for school districts. Due to these concerns, the subcommittee adopted the following supplemental report language, requesting that the LAO do an analysis of the problem. The supplemental report language was eventually approved by the conference committee to be included in the final budget.

California Department of Education – Evaluation of Instructional Materials Program. The Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) shall assess the cost-effectiveness of the state's instructional materials program. The assessment shall: (a) track the rate of recent cost increases in instructional materials and (b) compare the per pupil costs and rate increase of instructional materials in California with other states, giving special attention to differences among (i) states that serve similar students yet have higher achievement than California, (ii) adoption and nonadoption states, and (iii) states that have similar standards, to the extent this can practicably be determined. The report also shall include recommendations for lowering the costs of instructional materials in California. The LAO shall submit its report to the Legislature by April 1, 2007.

The LAO may be available at today's hearing to present some preliminary observations stemming from the language.

Last year's discussions regarding criteria for the upcoming 2008 Reading/Language Arts adoption. Last year, due to concerns about the lack of options for school districts, teachers and administrators requested that the State Board consider including the following concept in the criteria that publishers must address in submitting materials for the upcoming Reading/Language Arts adoption in 2008: a basic Reading/Language Arts program for English learners that teaches academic content at the same time it is teaching literacy skills in English. Proponents of this option noted the importance of providing more options for school districts to address the specific challenges that English learners face in learning English and mastering academic content at the same time. The State Board did not include this concept in the final criteria it adopted for publishers to meet. Advocates are proposing that this option be considered in a pilot project, with an evaluation component to judge its effectiveness in improving academic achievement and mastery of academic English.

ISSUE 2: TRANSLATION OF PARENT DOCUMENTS

The issues for the subcommittee to consider are:

- An April DOF letter proposing to re-appropriate unused funding set aside in previous budgets for the translation of state educational documents intended for districts to provide to parents of students in public schools regarding their students' education.
- Issues related to the need for translation and interpreter services at the local level.

BACKGROUND:

April DOF letter. In an April DOF letter to the Legislature, the administration proposes to give CDE the authority to spend funds that were set-aside in previous budgets for CDE to contract with vendors to translate state prototype documents for parents into languages other than English. Specifically, it proposes to ensure that CDE has the authority to spend \$500,000 in unused federal Title III funds that were earmarked in prior budgets for this purpose. The 2005 and 2006 budgets contained \$450,000 in one-time federal Title III carryover funds for CDE to contract for the translation of prototype documents that it provides to districts to give to parents in compliance with a variety of educational requirements (i.e., notices of expulsion, notices of a school's federal program improvement status, notices related to state assessments, etc.) DOF is proposing the following language to CDE's state operations budget item to conform with the proposal:

X. Of the funds appropriated in this item, \$500,000 is available to the SDE for the cost of translating into languages other than English state prototype documents. The SDE shall be required to contract with appropriate translators or translator services to translate these documents. The SDE shall post all documents translated as a result of the appropriation referenced in this provision on its existing Internet-based electronic clearinghouse system of state and locally translated parental notification documents.

COMMENTS:

Background. Current law requires school districts to communicate with parents via notification documents. State law also specifies that in cases where non-English speaking parents of a single primary language represent more than 15% or more of the students enrolled, the district must provide those notices in that primary language. A 2006 State Audit report found that compliance with this state requirement is low for other languages other than Spanish.

In recent years, the subcommittee has heard testimony regarding the need for more local resources to facilitate communication between schools and parents who do not

speak English. In response, in 2004, the subcommittee approved an augmentation of \$267,000 in federal carryover funds for an Internet-based clearinghouse on CDE's website for districts to share parental notification documents translated into languages other than English. This funding was included in the final 2004-05 budget, and the clearinghouse is now up and running on CDE's website. The following year, in 2005, the subcommittee approved \$450,000 for CDE to translate state prototype documents, to eventually be posted on the clearinghouse. The funding was included in the final 2005-06 budget, and continued in last year's budget. (This is the funding related to DOF's April letter proposal, above.)

Need for interpreter services? Advocates and parents also argue for the need for more interpreter services at the local level, to facilitate in-person communication between school officials and parents about important matters such as academic performance, school programs and services, standardized testing and discipline rules. At a recent hearing, the subcommittee heard testimony from a parent of a student at a state special school, citing the need for American Sign Language interpreters. Advocates also cite the need for interpretations services for languages other than English, in order to increase parental involvement among parents who speak languages other than English. They cite research that shows a positive relationship between parental involvement and students' academic achievement, yet they note that 43% of California's six million public school students speak a primary language other than English at home.

ISSUE 3: TESTING – CALIFORNIA HIGH SCHOOL EXIT EXAM

The issues for the subcommittee to consider are:

- The administration's budget proposals regarding this exam.
- The most recent information on passage rates for the California High School Exit Exam.

BACKGROUND:

The Governor's budget proposes the following amounts to administer the exam and help students pass it:

- **Funding for CAHSEE maintenance and administration.** The budget proposes \$10.9 million in Proposition 98 funds and \$10.6 million in federal funds for the maintenance and administration of this exam. This funding level is roughly comparable to last year's level, but contains a small decrease to reflect the administration's estimate of lower program costs in 2007-08.
- **Additional administrations for seniors.** The Governor's January 10 budget also proposes to continue \$5.1 million that was contained in last year's budget to increase the number of times that seniors can take the exam in their senior year, from the current three times to five times. The Governor also proposes an increase of \$270,000 for the additional apportionment costs related to this proposal, as well as budget control language clarifying the intent of the proposal.
- **California High School Exit Exam Supplemental Instruction.** Last year's budget provided an increase of \$49 million for a supplemental instruction program designed to assist 12th graders who have not yet passed the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE). The Governor proposes to continue this increase, and provides a COLA for the program, for a total proposed funding level of \$72.4 million. The Governor also proposes to hold the program harmless from negative statewide growth.
- **Individual Intervention Materials to Pass the CAHSEE.** Last year's budget provided \$5.5 million in one-time funds for districts to purchase state-approved individual intervention materials for students who have failed the CAHSEE. The Governor proposes to continue this program at \$5 million, and also with one-time (Proposition 98 reversion account) funds. Eligible school districts could receive funding of up to \$20 per each 11th and 12th grader who has failed one or both parts of the exam. Eligible districts can only spend the funding on materials recommended by CDE and approved by the State Board of Education. Materials approved are required to: a) assist students in mastering standards covered in the CAHSEE, b) include a computer-based component that adapts to each

student's specific remediation needs and c) include professional development support for teachers.

California High School Exit Exam passage rates. As noted above, the class of 2006 was the first graduating class to be subject to the requirement that students pass the California High School Exit Exam in order to graduate from high school and receive a diploma. According to the most recent data collected by CDE, nearly 40,000 seniors from the class of 2006 did not pass by the end of the 2005-06. Since that time, CDE indicates that a few more have passed the exam. It is unclear whether the remaining students are still working to pass it, or what effect this had on their educational goals. Overall, CDE reported that slightly higher than 91% of all students in the class of 2006 passed the CAHSEE. (This does not include students who were scheduled to graduate by 2006 but dropped out before they got to their senior year.) However, this rate varied by school and by sub-group. The following charts contain information on passage rates by group of students. However, it appears that these figures do not include students who dropped out of school before graduating.

Percentage of students, by graduating class, that passed the CAHSEE by the end of their senior year, by sub-group

	Class of 2006
All	91%
Economically disadvantaged	86
English learner	76
Special education	48

Source: CDE, November, 2006

Percentage of students, by graduating class, that passed the CAHSEE by the end of 11th grade, by sub-group

	Class of 2006	Class of 2007
All	78%	79%
Economically disadvantaged	66	68
English learner	51	52
Special education	36	34

Source: CDE, November, 2006

Percentage of students, by graduating class, that passed the CAHSEE by the end of 10th grade, by sub-group

	Class of 2006	Class of 2007	Class of 2008
All	73%	75%	73%
Economically disadvantaged	48	50	51
English learner	30	31	27
Special education	19	20	21

Source: CDE, November, 2006

COMMENTS:

The passage rates in this agenda are from data provided by CDE last November. CDE indicates that it has updated information that it will present at today's hearing.

Questions for CDE. Staff notes the following potential questions for CDE regarding CAHSEE passage rates:

- **Passage rates:**
 - Do your passage rates include students who dropped out of high school?
 - Do they include students who are in special education programs?

- **Students who didn't pass from the class of 2006:**
 - Do we know what has happened to the nearly 40,000 students from the class of 2006 who did not pass the CAHSEE? Do we know whether they were otherwise eligible to graduate (met other credit and course requirements)?
 - Where are they and what are they doing?
 - Have they tried to take the exam again?
 - How successful were they in their attempts?

- **Options for students who don't pass.**
 - What are options that CDE is proposing for students that can't graduate because they don't pass the CAHSEE?
 - Who tells these students about their options?
 - After they are out of high school, can they try to pass it again, and what do they need to do to take it?

Staff also notes that the Legislature provided \$100,000 in last year's budget for CDE to look at English learners and special education students in the class of 2006 who did not pass the CAHSEE. CDE will be available at today's hearing to discuss the status of that study. CDE will also be available to provide information on how schools used the supplemental instruction money.

ISSUE 4: ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS: COMMUNITY DAY SCHOOLS

The issue for the subcommittee to consider is the Governor's proposed funding level for this program.

BACKGROUND:

Governor's budget. The Governor's budget proposes \$51.8 million for this program. This reflects an increase of \$2 million over last year's funding level to reflect a cost-of-living adjustment. The budget does not propose any funding for growth for this funding. Current state does not require a growth adjustment for the program.

Background on the program. Current law authorizes school districts and county offices of education to operate community day schools as an alternative to regular schools. The program was established pursuant to Chapter 974, statues of 1995 (AB 922 (Friedman)) as part of a package of bills that required expulsion for certain offenses. These schools serve students who are expelled, on probation, or referred by a school attendance review board. Districts and county offices of education that run these schools collect regular revenue limit funding for students that attend, plus a supplement offered as an incentive for these schools to offer a six-hour day. Other programs for expelled students (i.e., county office-run community schools) are only required to offer a four-hour day. The supplement provides over \$3000 per ADA to county offices and over \$4000 per ADA to districts for these programs.

COMMENTS:

Growth not funded. According to information provided by CDE, this program has grown significantly since its inception. Average daily attendance statewide in the program was only 862 in 1996-97, and has increased more than twelve-fold since that time. Under current statute, the state is not required to provide growth for this factor. As a consequence, funding has not kept up with growth in the program. When the funding provided in the budget is not enough to fund actual participation, CDE must prorate the funding. CDE has submitted a budget request to the administration, requesting an increase of \$4.1 million to the program. This reflects its estimate of a \$2 million shortfall for 2006-07 and a \$2.1 million shortfall for 2007-08. While current law authorizes CDE to use unused funds in the budget to fund any shortfalls, they must obtain approval from DOF to do so.

ISSUE 5: ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS – EFFECT OF GOVERNOR'S JUVENILE JUSTICE REFORM PROPOSAL ON COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS – INFORMATION ONLY

The issue for the subcommittee to consider is the potential effect of the Governor's juvenile justice reform proposal on the education services that county offices might provide for the affected students.

BACKGROUND:

Governor's budget. In his January 10 budget, the Governor proposes to reduce the population served by the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) by half, by redirecting certain juvenile offenders to local juvenile facilities. It is estimated that approximately 1,450 young people will be directly affected by the Governor's proposal. The Governor's proposal reflects an estimated savings of approximately \$96 million in General Fund, offset by a \$53 million augmentation to provide counties with block grant funds of \$94,000 per offender to offset the local costs of keeping custody and taking custody of juvenile offenders previously held by DJJ.

The Governor's proposal is under the jurisdiction of Subcommittee No. 4 on State Administration, and is not before this subcommittee for consideration. However, the proposal may affect county offices of education, since they are responsible for providing educational services to local juvenile facilities. It is unclear whether the \$94,000 augmentation proposed by the administration for counties is intended to cover any of the educational costs of the affected juveniles.

COMMENTS:

It is unclear whether the Governor's proposal will necessitate any adjustment in funds to reflect the educational costs of the proposal. The administration indicates that it is actively working on the issue.

ISSUE 6: SCHOOL NUTRITION: FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES PROGRAM

The issue for the subcommittee to consider is the Governor's proposal to re-appropriate unused funds to continue the Fresh Start program to serve fresh fruits and vegetables for school breakfasts.

BACKGROUND:

Governor's budget. The Governor proposes to re-appropriate any unused funds from a 2005 budget proposal to provide funds to school districts to help them buy more fresh fruits and vegetables to serve in school breakfast programs. The administration estimates that there will be \$2 to \$3 million in unused funds from the original 2005 \$18.2 million appropriation.

Prior year budget amounts for this program. The 2005 Budget Act contained \$18.2 million in one-time funds for the California Fresh Start Pilot Program. The amount of \$18.2 million was based on an assumption of 100% participation by districts that currently serve breakfast, and the fact that 180,000 school breakfasts are served statewide. Last year's budget also contained language to re-appropriate unused funds from 2005. The 2005 budget act also contained \$300,000 for a county office of education to do an independent evaluation of this program, and \$100,000 for the development of an online training program on how best to prepare, store and serve fresh fruits and vegetables.

Background on the program. The California Fresh Start Pilot Program was created by Chapter 236, Statutes of 2005, SB 281 (Maldonado) of 2005. It allows school districts and charter schools to apply for an additional reimbursement of \$0.10 per meal, to supplement funding they receive through the state and federal School Breakfast Programs. Approximately 1,100 school districts and charter schools currently participate in the breakfast program. Districts participating in the Fresh Start Pilot Program must spend at least 90 percent of the funding for the direct purchase of "nutritious" fruits and vegetables, which may be canned or fresh, but may not be juice or deep-fried. Districts may spend the remaining 10% on costs related to providing the required nutrition education and taste testing, and for related administrative costs. Receiving districts must also agree to serve one or two servings of fruits or vegetables at breakfast, and include tasting and sampling as part of nutrition education. Districts must use the funds to provide either an additional serving of nutritious fruit or vegetables or a larger quantity or better quality of serving. Districts must use the funds at breakfast, unless they already have two servings of nutritious fruits or vegetables during breakfast, in which case they can use the money to provide the supplement during the after school snack.

COMMENTS:

Prior legislative interest in the program. Last year, there was some controversy about the types of fruits and vegetables that could be served with the additional funding. Specifically, the legislation specified that participating districts could use this funding to purchase “nutritious” fruit or vegetables, which is defined as including fresh and canned fruit and vegetables. Nutrition experts note that canned fruit is not as nutritious as fresh fruit, because it may contain syrup.

Evaluation. CDE notes that the evaluation of this program (by UC Berkeley) found that fresh fruit was served in about 95% of school breakfasts, compared to prior to the project, when fresh fruits was served in only a third of school breakfasts.

**ISSUE 7: STATEWIDE DATA SYSTEMS -- MICROSOFT SETTLEMENT FUNDING –
INFORMATION ONLY**

The issue for the subcommittee to consider is the availability of \$400 million in funding for schools' information technology uses. The funding is part of a lawsuit settlement, and is not available for appropriation in the budget.

BACKGROUND:

Substantial resources. In fall of 2006, the Superintendent of Public Instruction announced the availability of more than \$400 million in funding for educational technology for California schools as a result of a settlement agreement between California consumers and Microsoft. The source of these funds for schools is unclaimed settlement funds for California consumers and businesses from a lawsuit settled in November, 2004. The unclaimed funds were then directed to K-12 schools for a grant program to support and implement education technology that fosters effective teaching and promotes student achievement in eligible schools. The total settlement amount represents a substantial increase for technology hardware and software purchases. The Legislature has no control over these funds.

Eligibility. Schools are eligible to receive vouchers if 40 percent of the attending students are eligible to receive free or reduced price meals. Schools within school districts or county offices of education, direct-funded charters and state special schools, are eligible to receive funding as long as they meet the poverty criteria above. The initial allocation of \$250 million provides approximately \$50 per student. This amount will be increased to reflect approximately \$150 million from the second allocation. LEAs were able to start submitting voucher claims on September 25, 2006. The application process for vouchers remains open until June 1, 2008. Vouchers must be redeemed by September 2012.

Requirement for Technology Plans: School districts are required to apply for vouchers on behalf of their eligible schools. All applicant districts must have a current, state-approved technology plan in order to be eligible for funding. State Special Schools, direct funded charter schools, and county offices of education are not required to have a state-approved plan.

Potential uses for the vouchers. In order to receive vouchers from the settlement, eligible schools must have a current district technology plan that meets CDE criteria and has been approved through a state review process. According to CDE, vouchers will be issued in two categories:

- General purpose vouchers – allowable purchases include specific types of hardware, non-custom software for that hardware, evaluation tools, information technology services and professional development (the latter two must be obtained from approved providers)
- Software vouchers – allowable purchases include specific categories of software that are published or sold by any software provider.

CDE's responsibilities. CDE is responsible for issuing the request for applications, reviewing applicants for eligibility and monitoring the program. A Settlement Claims Administrator, selected by the Court, will be responsible for issuing the vouchers.

COMMENTS:

The Department of Education will provide an update on the allocation of these settlement funds to schools in California.

As noted above, the Legislature has no control over these funds. However, it is important for the subcommittee to note the availability of these funds for school districts, as it makes budget decisions regarding state funding for information technology purposes.

ISSUE 8: MISCELLANEOUS PROPOSALS

The issues for the subcommittee to consider are various issues requested to be heard by Assemblymembers. The issues are on today's agenda for the purpose of introduction for possible discussion in future subcommittee hearings and for consideration in fiscal years subsequent to the 2007-08 fiscal year.

BACKGROUND:

- **AVID.** AVID stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination. It is a program in middle and high schools that helps students complete college preparation courses and gain access to college. The issue presented today relates to a) expanding the program to more middle schools and b) expanding the program to elementary schools.
- **National Board Certified teachers.** National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) Certification Incentive Program was created several years ago and currently provides stipends of \$20,000 (paid over four years) to National Board Certified-teachers who work in low-decile schools. The Governor's budget proposes to reduce funding for the program from last year's funding of \$7.5 million to \$6 million, citing lower-than-anticipated participation in the program. The proposal presented today would bring the funding back to last year's level and expand the program to provide fee support.
- **On-line library databases.** The issue presented today will relate to states that purchase on-line library databases for use by students in their school libraries. California does not currently purchase any such databases at a statewide level.
- **Truancy and dropout prevention.** The issue presented today relates to a proposal to develop and fund a truancy and dropout reduction center.
- **Center for Civic Education.** The budget provides \$250,000 to the Center for Civic Education to training middle and high school students in civic education. The issue presented today would expand that training to elementary school students.

COMMENTS:

Staff notes that the Assembly has a policy against funding individual members' bills through the budget, in deference to the house's process whereby fiscal bills are considered by the Appropriations Committee.