

Introduced by

Legislative Management

(Taxation Committee)

1 A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact sections 57-15-01.1, 57-64-01, 57-64-02, 57-64-03, and
2 57-64-04 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to allocation of state funding to school
3 districts for mill levy reduction grants and property tax levies of school districts; to repeal
4 chapter 57-16 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to certain excess levies of school
5 districts; to provide an appropriation; to provide for transfers; and to provide an effective date.

6 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

7 **SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 57-15-01.1 of the North Dakota Century Code is
8 amended and reenacted as follows:

9 **57-15-01.1. Protection of taxpayers and taxing districts.**

10 Each taxing district may levy the lesser of the amount in dollars as certified in the budget of
11 the governing body, or the amount in dollars as allowed in this section, subject to the following:

- 12 1. No taxing district may levy more taxes expressed in dollars than the amounts allowed
13 by this section.
- 14 2. For purposes of this section:
 - 15 a. "Base year" means the taxing district's taxable year with the highest amount
16 levied in dollars in property taxes of the three taxable years immediately
17 preceding the budget year. For a park district general fund, the "amount levied in
18 dollars in property taxes" is the sum of amounts levied in dollars in property taxes
19 for the general fund under section 57-15-12 including any additional levy
20 approved by the electors, the insurance reserve fund under section 32-12.1-08,
21 the employee health care program under section 40-49-12, the public recreation
22 system under section 40-55-09 including any additional levy approved by the
23 electors, forestry purposes under section 57-15-12.1 except any additional levy

- 1 approved by the electors, pest control under section 4-33-11, and handicapped
2 person programs and activities under section 57-15-60;
- 3 b. "Budget year" means the taxing district's year for which the levy is being
4 determined under this section;
- 5 c. "Calculated mill rate" means the mill rate that results from dividing the base year
6 taxes levied by the sum of the taxable value of the taxable property in the base
7 year plus the taxable value of the property exempt by local discretion or
8 charitable status, calculated in the same manner as the taxable property; and
- 9 d. "Property exempt by local discretion or charitable status" means property
10 exempted from taxation as new or expanding businesses under chapter 40-57.1;
11 improvements to property under chapter 57-02.2; or buildings belonging to
12 institutions of public charity, new single-family residential or townhouse or
13 condominium property, property used for early childhood services, or pollution
14 abatement improvements under section 57-02-08.
- 15 3. A taxing district may elect to levy the amount levied in dollars in the base year. Any
16 levy under this section must be specifically approved by a resolution approved by the
17 governing body of the taxing district. Before determining the levy limitation under this
18 section, the dollar amount levied in the base year must be:
- 19 a. Reduced by an amount equal to the sum determined by application of the base
20 year's calculated mill rate for that taxing district to the final base year taxable
21 valuation of any taxable property and property exempt by local discretion or
22 charitable status which is not included in the taxing district for the budget year but
23 was included in the taxing district for the base year.
- 24 b. Increased by an amount equal to the sum determined by the application of the
25 base year's calculated mill rate for that taxing district to the final budget year
26 taxable valuation of any taxable property or property exempt by local discretion or
27 charitable status which was not included in the taxing district for the base year
28 but which is included in the taxing district for the budget year.
- 29 c. Reduced to reflect expired temporary mill levy increases authorized by the
30 electors of the taxing district. For purposes of this subdivision, an expired
31 temporary mill levy increase does not include a school district general fund mill

1 rate exceeding one hundred ten mills which has expired or has not received
2 approval of electors for an extension under subsection 2 of section 57-64-03.

3 d. Increased, for a school district determining its levy limitation under this section,
4 by the amount the school district's mill levy reduction grant under section
5 57-64-02 for the base year exceeds the amount of the school district's mill levy
6 reduction grant under section 57-64-02 for the budget year.

7 e. Reduced for a school district determining its levy limitation under this section, by
8 the amount the school district's mill levy reduction grant under section 57-64-02
9 for the budget year exceeds the amount of the school district's mill levy reduction
10 grant under section 57-64-02 for the base year.

11 4. In addition to any other levy limitation factor under this section, a taxing district may
12 increase its levy in dollars to reflect new or increased mill levies authorized by the
13 legislative assembly or authorized by the electors of the taxing district.

14 5. Under this section a taxing district may supersede any applicable mill levy limitations
15 otherwise provided by law, or a taxing district may levy up to the mill levy limitations
16 otherwise provided by law without reference to this section, but the provisions of this
17 section do not apply to the following:

18 a. Any irrevocable tax to pay bonded indebtedness levied pursuant to section 16 of
19 article X of the Constitution of North Dakota.

20 b. The one-mill levy for the state medical center authorized by section 10 of article X
21 of the Constitution of North Dakota.

22 6. A school district choosing to determine its levy authority under this section may apply
23 subsection 3 only to the amount in dollars levied for general fund purposes under
24 section 57-15-14 or, if the levy in the base year included separate general fund and
25 special fund levies under sections 57-15-14 and 57-15-14.2, the school district may
26 apply subsection 3 to the total amount levied in dollars in the base year for both the
27 general fund and special fund accounts. School district levies under any section other
28 than section 57-15-14 may be made within applicable limitations but those levies are
29 not subject to subsection 3.

- 1 7. Optional levies under this section may be used by any city or county that has adopted
2 a home rule charter unless the provisions of the charter supersede state laws related
3 to property tax levy limitations.

4 **SECTION 2. AMENDMENT.** Section 57-64-01 of the North Dakota Century Code is
5 amended and reenacted as follows:

6 **57-64-01. Definitions.**

7 For purposes of this chapter:

- 8 1. "Combined education mill rate" means the combined number of mills levied by a
9 school district for the general fund, high school tuition, and high school transportation.
10 2. "Qualifying school district" means a school district that meets the conditions and
11 requirements of this chapter to receive a mill levy reduction grant.
12 ~~3. "Weighted student unit" means weighted student unit as determined for the school-~~
13 ~~district under chapter 15.1-27.~~

14 **SECTION 3. AMENDMENT.** Section 57-64-02 of the North Dakota Century Code is
15 amended and reenacted as follows:

16 **57-64-02. Mill levy reduction allocation and grant.**

17 Each qualifying school district in the state is entitled to a mill levy reduction allocation and
18 grant as provided in this chapter, subject to legislative appropriation to the superintendent of
19 public instruction.

- 20 1. The mill levy reduction allocation rate for each qualifying school district is equal to the
21 payments to the school district based on the per student payment rate as determined
22 for the school year under chapter 15.1-27.
23 2. The grant to a qualifying school district may not exceed the smallest of:
24 a. The allocation determined under subsection 1;
25 b. The taxable valuation of property in the school district in the previous taxable
26 year times the number of mills determined by subtracting one hundred mills from
27 the combined education mill rate of the school district for taxable year 2008; or
28 c. The taxable valuation of property in the school district in the previous taxable
29 year times seventy-five mills.
30 3. For purposes of this section, "taxable valuation" means the valuation to which the mill
31 rate is applied to determine the amount of ad valorem taxes or payments in lieu of

1 taxes, and includes taxable valuation determined for agricultural, residential, and
2 commercial property; gas company property, pipeline property, power company
3 property, and railroad property assessed by the state board of equalization under
4 chapter 57-06; mobile homes under chapter 57-55; land controlled by the game and
5 fish department subject to valuation under chapter 57-02.1; land owned by the board
6 of university and school lands or the state treasurer subject to valuation under chapter
7 57-02.3; national guard land subject to valuation under chapter 37-07.3; farmland or
8 ranchland owned by nonprofit organizations for conservation purposes subject to
9 valuation under section 10-06.1-10; land acquired by the state water commission for
10 the Devils Lake project subject to valuation under chapter 61-02; a workforce safety
11 and insurance building and associated real property subject to valuation under section
12 65-02-32; and carbon dioxide pipeline property subject to valuation under section
13 57-06-17.2. For purposes of this section, "taxable valuation" includes the taxable
14 valuation of the homestead credit reimbursed by the state under section 57-02-08.2
15 and the disabled veterans' credit reimbursed by the state under section 57-02-08.8.

16 4. The grant to a qualifying school district may not be less than the grant to that school
17 district in the preceding school year.

18 4.5. The superintendent of public instruction shall report to each qualifying school district
19 by July fifteenth of each year the mill levy reduction grant in dollars available to that
20 school district during the upcoming school year.

21 5.6. By December first, January first, February first, and March first of each school year,
22 the superintendent of public instruction shall forward to each qualifying school district
23 installments equal to twenty-five percent of the total mill levy reduction grant the
24 district is eligible to receive during that school year.

25 6.7. Allocations to a school district under this chapter are not considered per student
26 payments or state aid for purposes of chapter 15.1-27.

27 7.8. For all purposes under law relating to allocation of funds among political subdivisions
28 based on property tax levies, property taxes levied by a school district are the amount
29 that would have been levied without the mill reduction grant provided to the school
30 district under this chapter.

1 **SECTION 4. AMENDMENT.** Section 57-64-03 of the North Dakota Century Code is
2 amended and reenacted as follows:

3 **57-64-03. School district levy compliance.**

4 1. To be eligible to receive a grant under this chapter, a qualifying school district must
5 establish a spending level that does not result in a general fund mill rate exceeding
6 one hundred ten mills. The certificate of levy form filed with the county auditor by a
7 qualifying school district must reflect the revenue to be received by the school district
8 under this chapter and that the general fund mill rate for the school district will not
9 exceed one hundred ten mills unless:

10 a. The district has approval of a majority of the electors of the school district for a
11 higher levy;

12 b. The higher levy is the result of a school district reorganization in compliance with
13 chapter 15.1-12; or

14 c. The higher levy does not produce an amount in dollars exceeding the amount
15 allowed under section 57-15-01.1 for taxable year 2008 reduced by the amount
16 of the school district's mill levy reduction grant under section 57-64-02 for the
17 budget year; or

18 d. The district has authority for a higher levy under subdivision b of subsection 2.

19 2. The authority under subdivision a or b of subsection 1 for a school district to levy a
20 general fund mill rate exceeding one hundred ten mills applies for not more than ten
21 taxable years at a time after taxable year 2008 unless a majority of the electors of the
22 school district approve an extension of that authority. Approval by electors of extension
23 of levy authority under subdivision a or b of subsection 1 is effective for not more than
24 ten taxable years at a time. A ballot measure for approval by electors of extension of
25 levy authority under subdivision a or b of subsection 1 is subject to the following:

26 a. The ballot measure must specify the number of mills for the general fund mill rate
27 for which approval is sought.

28 b. If a ballot measure for approval of extension of levy authority to levy a specific
29 number of mills under this subsection is not approved by a majority of the electors
30 of the school district voting on the question, the school district general fund levy
31 limitation for subsequent years is subject to the limitations as determined for the

1 school district's budget year under section 57-15-01.1 or 57-15-14, whichever
2 produces the higher levy limitation.

3 **SECTION 5. AMENDMENT.** Section 57-64-04 of the North Dakota Century Code is
4 amended and reenacted as follows:

5 **57-64-04. Levy reduction priority.**

6 In setting mill rates for qualified school districts, the county auditor shall apply funds
7 allocated to a school district under this chapter for mill levy reduction first to reduce the number
8 of mills levied for general fund purposes and, if allocation funds remain after the general fund
9 mill rate is reduced to zero, the balance must be applied to reduce the high school tuition levy
10 and, if allocation funds remain after the high school tuition levy mill rate is reduced to zero, then
11 to reduce the high school transportation levy of the qualified school district.

12 **SECTION 6. REPEAL.** Chapter 57-16 of the North Dakota Century Code is repealed.

13 **SECTION 7. APPROPRIATION.** There is appropriated out of any moneys in the general
14 fund in the state treasury, not otherwise appropriated, the sum of \$341,790,000, or so much of
15 the sum as may be necessary, to the superintendent of public instruction for the purpose of
16 allocation of mill levy reduction grants to school districts under chapter 57-64, for the biennium
17 beginning July 1, 2011, and ending June 30, 2013.

18 **SECTION 8. TRANSFER - PROPERTY TAX RELIEF SUSTAINABILITY FUND -**

19 **GENERAL FUND.** The office of management and budget shall transfer the sum of
20 \$295,000,000 from the property tax relief sustainability fund to the general fund on July 1, 2011.

21 **SECTION 9. TRANSFER - PERMANENT OIL TAX TRUST FUND - GENERAL FUND.** The
22 office of management and budget shall transfer the sum of \$46,790,000 from the permanent oil
23 tax trust fund to the general fund on July 1, 2011.

24 **SECTION 10. TRANSFER - PERMANENT OIL TAX TRUST FUND - PROPERTY TAX**
25 **RELIEF SUSTAINABILITY FUND.** The office of management and budget shall transfer the sum
26 of \$341,790,000 from the permanent oil tax trust fund to the property tax relief sustainability
27 fund on July 1, 2012.

28 **SECTION 11. EFFECTIVE DATE.** Section 1 of this Act is effective for taxable years
29 beginning after December 31, 2010. The remainder of this Act is effective July 1, 2011.