WHEREAS the Iowa Legislature and Governor annually set the state cost per pupil which determines the amount of revenue available to school districts to invest in the education of Iowa’s students,

WHEREAS 170 of Iowa’s school districts have been historically granted spending authority in addition to the state cost per pupil, as much as $175 per student, yet 163 Iowa schools districts are prohibited from accessing that spending authority and effectively capped at the state cost per pupil,

WHEREAS local property taxes in the 170 districts with the additional spending authority are the sole source of funding for those additional resources,

WHEREAS historical spending patterns of school districts over four decades ago are the basis for this unequal revenue per student, yet have nothing to do with student or district needs today,

WHEREAS the per pupil inequality respects no borders, creating capacity inequities in districts which neighbor each other, contributing to open enrollment challenges for districts with lower capacity and challenging student needs,

WHEREAS the state has a vested interest in promoting and supporting equality and fairness in its school funding formula,

WHEREAS all school districts have faced recent years of record low funding increases, so any state fix to this problem must attend to the needs of all districts without further disadvantaging the 170 districts that have depended on this additional authority,

WHEREAS the cost to the state of fixing this per pupil inequality is estimated at $88.5 million, the phased-in solution over ten years in SF 455, as approved by the Iowa Senate in the 2017 Legislative Session, is affordable to the state.

WHEREAS the other major inequity in school funding is school transportation costs, with school transportation mandated by the state, but paid out of the school foundation formula without consideration for the number of students transported, the number of route miles traveled, or the difficulty of terrain based on geography of school districts,

WHEREAS the cost of school transportation per student enrolled averages $308 per student, the range varies from a low of $13 per enrolled student to a high of $915 per enrolled student, according to the Iowa DE’s 2016 Annual Transportation Report,

WHEREAS the estimated total cost to the state of creating a transportation funding system outside of the school’s general fund to attain equity is an estimated $115 million, the phased-in solution over ten years in SF 455, as approved by the Iowa Senate in the 2017 Legislative Session, is affordable to the state.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED:

The Iowa Senate is to be commended for approving SF 455 in the 2017 Legislative Session, with 49 senators in favor and none opposed.

The Iowa House of Representatives should continue their work and move SF 455 out of the House Appropriations Committee to the full House for a vote and should approve this proposed solution to the per pupil inequality in the school funding formula and school transportation expenditure inequities.

Governor Reynolds should advocate for and approve SF 455 when it is sent to her on the basis of student equity in Iowa and the importance of an equal opportunity for all Iowa students to have a world-class education.

Local school boards should have the authority to use cash reserves to fund these per pupil inequalities, until the state is capable of appropriating sufficient funds to solve the problem statewide.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, we direct our school board secretary to send of copy of this resolution to our legislators and to local media to communicate with strong urgency that these inequalities be addressed without further delay.

Approved this day, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, with the following school board members voting in favor:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ President

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Vice President

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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