

**First Regular Session  
Sixty-fourth General Assembly  
STATE OF COLORADO**

**INTRODUCED**

LLS NO. R03-0552.01 Elizabeth Burger

**HR03-1014**

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**HOUSE SPONSORSHIP**

**Williams S.,** and Spence

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**House Committees**

State, Veterans, & Military Affairs  
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**HOUSE RESOLUTION 03-1014**

101     **CONCERNING ENCOURAGING SCHOOLS TO ADOPT MEASURES**  
102             **CONCERNING STUDENTS' BACKPACK WEIGHT.**

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1             WHEREAS, Thirty-four percent of school children carry more  
2             than 30% of their body weight in backpacks at least once a week; and

3             WHEREAS, Students who carry 15% or more of their body weight  
4             in backpacks are more susceptible to lower back and spinal pain; and

5             WHEREAS, In 1999, the American Academy of Orthopaedic  
6             Surgeons surveyed more than 100 doctors at 2 children's hospitals and  
7             58% said that they had young patients who complained of back and  
8             shoulder pain brought on by backpacks; and

9             WHEREAS, A recent survey of 345 Massachusetts children  
10            revealed that 55% of grade 5-8 students tote backpacks with loads  
11            topping 15% of their body weight and 1/3 of these students reported  
12            experiencing back pain; and

13            WHEREAS, Back and neck injuries can be lessened or prevented  
14            if students properly wear padded backpacks with waist straps; and

15            WHEREAS, To prevent back and neck strain, students should  
16            pack their backpacks with heavier items closest to their backs and lighter  
17            items farther from their backs; and

18            WHEREAS, The way backpacks are worn also affects students'

*Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.  
Capital letters indicate new material to be added to existing statute.  
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.*

1 posture and lower positioning of the backpack on a student's back  
2 approximates the body's center of gravity and has the least adverse effect  
3 on posture; and

4 WHEREAS, Schools should encourage students to wear their  
5 backpacks properly; and

6 WHEREAS, Schools should help students to develop good  
7 organizational skills, to anticipate assignment due dates, and to use their  
8 lockers effectively so that students don't carry unnecessary extra weight  
9 in their backpacks; now, therefore,

10 *Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the Sixty-fourth*  
11 *General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

12 (1) That we, the members of the House of Representatives of the  
13 Sixty-fourth General Assembly, encourage school districts to adopt  
14 methods to limit students' backpack weight and policies to encourage  
15 students to wear and pack their backpacks properly.

16 (2) That we encourage schools to incorporate strategies suggested  
17 by the American Occupational Therapy Association to help students  
18 reduce the weight they are carrying daily in their backpacks and to  
19 participate in such events as National School Backpack Awareness Day.

20 *Be It Further Resolved,* That copies of this resolution be sent to  
21 the State Board of Education; the Colorado Association of School  
22 Boards; the Board of Education for the Cherry Creek School District; the  
23 Parent-Teacher Organization of Thunderridge Middle School; Terry  
24 Killin, Principal of Thunderridge Middle School; The Center for  
25 Education in Law and Democracy; Michael Fisher, Director of Project  
26 Citizen with the Center for Civic Education; and the National Conference  
27 of State Legislatures.