

avoid busing. District 66 is officially neutral on the amendment, but actually offered the amendment in the committee, and would like to get around the problem that's been developed with these families who feel that they've been disadvantaged simply because of the fact they live within the Omaha Public Schools. If they lived in Millard Schools, or Bellevue Schools, or Papillion, they could opt freely into District 66 and not pay tuition. Simply because they live in the Omaha School District, simply because many of them live within one block of the Omaha School District, they have to pay tuition of \$3,800 a year to have their student go to District 66 schools. I think Senator Baack has made some good points, and I think we've cleared up the record with this discussion, but I don't believe we ought to be returning this amendment to Final Reading and would ask for your support in not returning the amendment.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Horgan. Senator Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM: Madam Chair, members of the body, first of all I have a question for Senator Baack. And this is one I ought to know the answer to, but I don't, regarding the intricacies of the choice bill.

SPEAKER BAACK: Yes.

SENATOR WITHEM: These students, as I understand it, have been paying, and Senator Horgan used the term \$3,800 a year. That was one of the my questions, \$3,800 a year, their parents have paid that to the Westside District for those students to attend Westside. What is there about the choice legislation that prohibits them from continuing to do that?

SPEAKER BAACK: There is nothing specifically in choice that would prohibit them from continuing to pay tuition. No, they can still do that.

SENATOR WITHEM: So the ques...they could continue to attend the Westside Schools, under the same provisions. When we passed choice, nothing happened to make it impossible for them...for them to do that, it's just a question as to whether they can become choice students, not having to pay that tuition. And in essence the Horgan amendment, Senator Horgan, allows those 28 students to be first in line as far as choice is concerned, to be the first ones that the district chooses, or how do they mix in with the other kids from Omaha, and the kids from