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Japan, they have to be able to compete, and if they can't compete, they can't do business, they can't survive. This is an important subject.

**SPEAKER KRISTENSEN:** One minute.

**SENATOR TYSON:** I think we have a law that we were told last year by its progenitors, as they were, that this is what we needed. I believed them. And I think we should keep on believing them until the Department of Education, which has evidently since then changed its mind again, gets its act together for the first time and starts testing our students, and they have the authority to do so here. There is nothing in here that says it has to be a particular test. It says that the Department of Education will provide a test, and that is what it should do. With the law that we passed last year they have the authority to do so. We should be talking about how much it costs and not whether we should substitute some other judgment more current than last year. Thank you.

**SPEAKER KRISTENSEN:** Senator Beutler.

**SENATOR BEUTLER:** Senator Kristensen, members of the Legislature, the whole reform movement, with regard to standards and with regard to the effort to come up to the very highest world class standards is really in danger of dissipation if you do not demand an assessment that is understandable by the public. And, if that happens, then everything we've done with regard to standards is in danger of having little or no effect. This is going to be a very hard vote for you because all of your school districts, by and large, will say, sure, we would like to retain control of this, we don't want to be compared, we want to do our own thing. You're not going to have a lot of average citizens in here talking about this. This is an organized thing: Department of Education, school districts; on the other side there is just you and I speaking out for what I think we all know is the majority of people out there. They want assessment. They want to know how their school district compares to other school districts. They want to know the areas where they need to do better. And so let's talk a little bit more about how you get there. The whole area of competition in the school system is one where you can go from one end of the