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FLOOR DEBATE

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about the continuing extenuation of the deadline. As we did this the first time, I understood that this was supposed to be an incentive to get everybody to react and do what they're supposed to do. Apparently, a few have. But if we extend it three more years, is that the end of the line on this, or is what we're really doing is paying people to be more efficient, which they should do just because it's more efficient, and that process is intended for everybody. I mean, do we need to make a decision about whether this is a program...

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: One minute.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...just for a few, or whether we're going to be willing to pay for anybody and everybody that's willing to either unify or merge. And if we do it for more this time, how then do we deny it to others who might come after this time period and want to do the same thing? So, if you could address those questions, Senator, I would be interested in your response. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Further discussion? Senator Wehrbein.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, and members of the body. Thank you. Senator Coordsen, I did want a clarification, too. I believe, as the way I understand it, there would be the \$3 million from the Hardship Fund, but beyond that will take an additional appropriation? And there would be an A bill necessary for the out years, including beyond the immediate biennium?

SENATOR COORDSEN: I believe that would be accurate, Senator.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Senator Coordsen.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: And it could go as high as \$6 million, based on estimates that are probably difficult to arrive at because of the lack of knowledge of who will use it, is that...

SENATOR COORDSEN: I, when my time comes, I have a list of the Department of Education's towns, school districts that have