

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

April 9, 2001

LB 664

some of the discussion this morning indicating that we are engaging in some significant decisions this year, financially and salary wise, retirement wise, with respect to the teachers. And I think we all certainly want to encourage people to enter the profession. We want...we want to pay our teachers appropriately and we are supportive of the job they do. In the eyes of some, if this amendment of Senator Bourne's had failed altogether, it would be interpreted at the very least by school districts or by...by teachers as...as...as being a negative. Now I might not agree with that, but it would certainly be perceived that way. On the other hand, state colleges come to our Appropriations Committee and ask for their entire budget. Community colleges are certainly supported by taxpayer dollars as well, but are in a different category per se than school districts and educational service units. So I think it makes good sense to allow state colleges and community colleges the opportunity to at least be considered for pooling, if that should be their desire to do so. One other piece of this, I have committed, and I believe Senator Bourne has as well, to try to speak with the educational association and the school boards about consideration of some input or some representation on the board that oversees the Education Alliance Health Plan. From my perspective, it would strengthen the plan, it would...it would help communication with school districts if they had some participation in the administration of that plan and the governing board. I don't know if that will come to pass. There is no commitment for that to come to pass, only a commitment by myself, and I'll let Senator Bourne speak for himself, that we will do everything we could, or I will do everything I can to encourage that to happen, which I think is a step forward. This will provide...this will leave in place pooling opportunities for all other political subdivisions, our cities, our towns, our NRDs, other governmental subdivisions to participate in pooling, if they can in fact find their way clear to do so, or if it's an advantage for them. With that, I would hope that the body would consider this to be reasonable. And I would yield the rest of my opening to Senator Bourne, if he would like it.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Senator Bourne.

SENATOR BOURNE: Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, Senator