

of Health dealing with mental retardation. There is a void. There is a need for leadership on the part of the State of Nebraska. LB 63 will not substantially affect the schools' budget. There was talk about the cost to the schools and what a great expense this program will be. I submit to you that this is not going to be at all an expensive proposition in the least. It is very minor expense that I think will have very long range cost benefits, that in the long run the small amount we may spend in developing the curriculum and the training we need for our teachers, will be more than made up for by the fact that we're going to have less children in the State of Nebraska that are going to be born with mental retardation and other developmental disabilities. That's a worthy goal. And when you just talk dollars and cents it's a positive long range benefit. We spend about twenty thousand dollars, give or take, ten thousand dollars a year on a developmentally disabled child...twenty thousand dollars a year. If we can just save just a handful of children from ever having to suffer from developmental disabilities, not only will they be saved from the pain and the agony, but the state's going to save money in trying to care for those children who will spend years in different institutions. So when you talk economics, this is a very positive amendment. LB 63 will not adversely affect local education decision making. What we do is mandate that in our health education courses mental retardation causes and potential preventive steps will be taught. We don't say how they're going to be taught. We don't mandate that certain hours be taught in the local school system. That's left up to the local school districts. I made that very explicit in LB 63, and it's explicit in this amendment. We are not taking away local control...

PRESIDENT: One minute, Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: ...we are enhancing it. This amendment will aid in the prevention of developmental disabilities. It's been shown over and over in testimony before the Education Committee that if we can institute some rigorous educational programs, we can cut in half the number of developmental disabilities that we have in the State of Nebraska. That's a tremendous, tremendous thing to do, and a tremendous accomplishment for this state and it ought to be a goal that we ought to I think take steps to accomplish. And the last thing that I want to mention is that Senator Murphy, when 63 was considered, questioned its constitutionality. I had an Attorney General's opinion that is in the Journal that said, no, there is no problem with constitutionality, and this, like all the other arguments