

April 15, 1981

LB 318

and members, I rise to support Senator Lamb in this amendment. As Senator Lamb indicated, he and I were the two members of the committee that had little problems with LB 318 and Senator Lamb has pinpointed very directly the portion of LB 318 that I had a problem with, and I would like to explain a little bit to the body as to the problem I have. As most of you know, I have fought long and hard to get more state aid dollars to local schools. It is my belief that the sales and income tax should support education more than it has in the past. But I think we should be straight up front about it and provide as near as possible an equal amount of dollars to the schools across the State of Nebraska and the provisions under Section 5 of this bill would certainly not do that. Even though I know how important vocational educational programs are, it seems that what is going to happen if we start weighting certain programs with more money is we are going to have those school districts that possibly already can afford the expensive vocational programs such as auto mechanics, welding and so forth, receiving a disproportionate share of the state aid money at the expense of those smaller or poorer school districts that possibly can't afford that type of a program to start with, and I think that is very grossly unfair. Also, it seems to me that we are going to set up a position...the schools in a position where the administrators...and I certainly don't blame them or wouldn't blame them, if I was an administrator, I would do the same thing...I would make certain that I had the number of students that I could possibly have that were gifted or that were in these other programs, I would go out and recruit students, if you would, to fill up the vocational programs that I did have in my school system that would get the most state aid dollars into my school system. And I don't think that is a good idea either. I don't think we should have school administrators actually hunting for warm bodies, if you will, to fill up programs to get more dollars. As I said earlier at the outset, I am for more state aid to education. I think any member of this body knows that, but I am also for it in a fashion that I can go back home or go to any school district in the State of Nebraska and say that I helped you, and under this program it wouldn't do that. It would help certain school districts, but wouldn't help others. And I don't think that is our responsibility as a Legislature to help certain programs and not others. One final point, I was very outspoken on the bill that Senator Peterson from Grand Island brought to us before the Education Committee this year. I was outspoken in the fact that I was not going to be in a position that I dictated curriculum to the local schools.