

SPEAKER MARVEL: The question has been called for. Do I see five hands? I do. All those in favor of ceasing debate vote aye, opposed vote no. Have you all voted? Record the vote.

CLERK: 26 ayes, 0 nays to cease debate, Mr. President.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Debate has ceased. The Chair recognizes Senator Beutler to close on his amendment.

SENATOR BEUTLER: The amendment, once again, members of the Legislature, is essentially a four year sunset clause. It says let's follow one high school class from freshman to senior and see what the effect of the bill is. You know Senator Wiitala made the statement that you can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink. I guess it is one of those cliches that the Chief Justice was talking about this morning, cliches that perhaps bear a little closer examination. And I would add to that that if you don't lead the horse to water, he is never going to drink, and we need to make the statement that if you want to live, if you really want to live in this society, you have got to drink, you have got to be educated, you have got to have a minimal level of education. U. S. News and World Report had an article this week "Why Johnny Can't Count-The Dangers for the U.S." At a time when split second calculations of numbers are more important than ever, the fact that millions of Americans are stumped by mathematics is setting off alarms. As U. S. analysts see it, technological illiteracy poses a major threat to American economic security and national defense, et cetera, et cetera, the math gap now. I think that we have to be aware that society is becoming more complex. We have to be aware of the fact that the average person is going to be called upon to use computers in their home for their everyday life in the not too distant future. Every person in the society is going to have to have a basic understanding of computer symbols and I think we need to emphasize it now, and a part of the way we can do that is by making the statement to our children that it is important that you finish high school. Dropouts are headed for disaster. Everything we know tells us this is true, and if we don't do everything possible in the high school years to deter them from that road, then I think that we, as a Legislature, that we, as a society, that you and I, as individuals, are remiss. The other cliche that we heard this morning was the one about a stitch in time saves nine. I suggest to you that this bill will have an affect on hundreds of students, and that perhaps a stitch in time in this case will save hundreds from taking a course that we know they should not take. Thank you.