

CLERK: I have nothing further on the bill Mr. President.

SENATOR LAMB: The motion is to advance LB 652. Any discussion on the bill? Senator Wiitala, your light is on.

SENATOR WIITALA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, most of you will probably identify with the fact as we go through history there is a pendulum that swings. It swings left and it swings right. It wasn't so long ago, ten-fifteen years ago when we were a nation of very rapid change during the 60's and early 70's that parents asked to teach their own children their own curriculum, give them their own schooling. There was some dissatisfaction with public schools or schools period. That was generated by a whole host of authors that laid out alternate ways of teaching children. But you know, back there when parents were suggesting this, society really didn't tolerate giving a child up to a parent, a parent being responsible totally and entirely for a child's education. There is no doubt in my mind that many of those parents could have done their children well but it would have been a very narrow, well a very narrow standard of excellence. We take a look at LB 652 I want you to understand the pendulum has swung the other way, far to the right. I'm asking you each individually how many of you have had a chance to visit a fundamentalist school, have had a chance to peruse through the accelerated christian education packets? How many of you have contemplated the fact that this curriculum represents an attempt to standardize children's education, a national curriculum, if you will? Now there is nothing wrong with a church school that attempts to teach the theology of its professed beliefs. But, when they attempt to teach a precise, a well defined ideology, it is an entirely different story. I commit to you that we vote for LB 652 that to a certain extent that we are allowing certain schools to operate as store front entities for ultra right extremism represented through a standard curriculum an attempt to nationalize a curriculum. Every child, unless you come from one of the unique religions, that has developed its own culture through the centuries, deserves to mix with all the personalities, with all the experiences that are within our society. What we are dealing with is a group of schools that are not separatist like the Amish or like the Mennonites. Those children will grow up in our society and they will mix with everyone else in our grand public.

SENATOR LAMB: One minute, Senator.