

SENATOR SCOFIELD: This is the best...one of the few programs, one of the best that I have seen, and it has come out of the educational system itself. This is spearheaded by mathematics teachers who have recognized this as a problem and have championed this as a way to address that problem.

SENATOR SCHMIT: It seems to me that the program may be satisfactory but, of course, it's on a very limited basis which lets out of the system a great many students who probably need some testing. But I think that there ought to be something more done to encourage that mathematics instruction throughout the system. I don't know that we need to really emphasize it at this point, at this late point in life. Certainly somewhere, somewhere along the line there is going to have to be additional emphasis upon these kinds of skills. The society today demands better mathematics proficiency and, of course, I'm afraid that we all recognize we just don't have it. But I would have to say, Senator Scofield, in all honesty, that, in my opinion, the need for this kind of a program does not speak well for the educational program which we have in our high school system today. And I'm probably going to encourage some criticism,...

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR SCHMIT: ...probably justified, for that statement. But certainly there has to be some sort of system embodied that will encourage across the system improvement in the mathematical instruction, or else this kind of program is going to be too little and too late. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Hall, further discussion on the bill?

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Mr. President, members. I rise in support of LB 134 and the measure that Senator Scofield has brought before the body. I happen to have had some personal experience with the program as well, much in the same vein that Sandy expressed. I was on a rather reluctant tour of the university this fall, and it wasn't that I didn't want to go, it is just that it took an awful lot of time and they asked for the entire day, but I did it. I have to admit to you that it was a whirlwind tour. But the one thing that did stick out in my mind was the time that I spent with Jim Lewis and Don Miller at the Mathematics Department on campus, and they talked about this