

confidence in those local boards. I don't know if Senator Lamb does or not, but I have confidence in those people, that they are able to make those kinds of decisions. And that is where those decisions are going to be made, on the local level. So, with that, I would just urge your adoption of this section of the amendment also that provides for the phase-in of this program. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Elmer, followed by Senator McFarland, then Senator Lamb, but may I introduce a guest under the north balcony of Senator Coordsen. We have Rick Onnen of Hebron, Nebraska. Would you please stand, Rick. Thank you for visiting us, Rick. Senator Owen Elmer.

SENATOR ELMER: Thank you, Mr. President. You know the point has been brought up here that this is going to be an elitist program. Well, what...and that the worst case scenario is that these students are going to wholesale pick up and leave a school district. Well, what does that say? That says that the parents in that school district are not happy. That says those parents in that school district have been captive of a bad education system. That says that those students need the opportunity to improve their education. I don't think there is going to be a wholesale exodus from any school district, but these two amendments that Senator Baack has before us state in case we have a school district that bad that they can address the issue and improve themselves and, perhaps, stem the tide. I don't think that any parents should be a captive when their children are concerned in their education. They need to have the opportunity to provide what they, in their opinion, is a better opportunity for those students. If we do have a situation where a lot of kids are going to leave, then this phase-in makes sense so that those districts can protect themselves. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Lamb, please, followed by Senator Bernard-Stevens.

SENATOR LAMB: Yes, Mr. President and members, I would agree with some of the things that Senator Withem says, that our current school system is somewhat elitist, in that if you have enough money, you can move out of the district or you can pay tuition somewhere else, and he is correct. But I don't know how to stop that, I don't know how to stop that. I think that is bad. I think it is much better if those people that are unhappy with the local school district would go down there, would run