

Schimek.

SENATOR DIERKS: Mr. President, and members of the body, I am speaking to you right now in favor of this amendment. I haven't talked about this entire procedure, entire bill at any time this morning but I have to tell you from the offset that I think that Senator Baack and Senator Bernard-Stevens have a very good idea. I don't object to the idea. I think it is very bold. I think we are taking an extremely large step with this bill. I think maybe it is a little too much, too quickly. I don't see a trap as far as the students are concerned like Senator Withem does. I have served on a school board in a very small district in Ewing, Nebraska for 15 years and I have seen students whose parents felt that they were trapped and who were eligible and able to go someplace else to get their education and did just that. I have seen that happen with them coming to our district, I have seen that happen with them leaving our district. I have seen parents become paranoid about the way their children were treated, and in most cases, I supported that paranoia because there was at times some mistreatment of kids because of the peck order, because of the caste system, or however you want to call it. I fought that thing all the while I was on that board, but it happens, but I don't see it as a trap. I think these kids are able to go where they want to go now. I don't think there is that big a problem with it. I have problems that we are moving too quickly with this bill, and I felt from the start that a phase-in program was necessary. I was a little disappointed that the phase-in did include just percentages. I felt that the phase-in should be done in the larger schools, and my opinion was like it was done in Minnesota, that the phase-in should begin with schools with a population, say, of 1,000 students or more. I have to tell you that the people from my district are very opposed to this. They look on it as a way of forcing reorganization. You have to understand that they are very suspicious in the first place because this sort of reorganization has been trying to be shoved down their throat for years, and they have to be looking at this sort of thing. I heard Senator Schmit say one time that all these bills have hidden agendas. I don't think that this is a hidden agenda, but I think maybe some other folks think that there is one in there. I am objecting right now to the concept that we are moving...because I think we are moving too quickly with what I think could be a very good idea. But for this body to jump into this type of legislation, at this time I find it a little bit fuzzy and I do support the phase-in amendment by Senator Lamb.