

we hear all the time on appropriation types of issues, it is a matter of personnel and funding. They don't have the personnel available, and I think I can attest to that on the occasions...

SENATOR SMITH: Because of the fact that you have tried to get information?

SENATOR WITHEM: Yeah, when I have tried to get, it is a painstaking process. They attempt to be cooperative, nobody stonewalls over there I don't think, but just the information is very slow in coming out, and it takes a little bit of money to gather data and to send out reports, to get all that information put together when it comes back in. Whether it has to be an independently identified data center with a label on the door or not, that is, you know, debatable.

SENATOR SMITH: It might be better if you did have based on the fact that you can't find that information when you want it now. You know, the other thing that I am wondering about...

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Smith, excuse me, would you speak into the microphone. It is very difficult to hear the question. Thank you.

SENATOR SMITH: Oh, I am sorry. The other thing that I am wondering is, Ron, all of the material, the information, when I taught school years ago and what I heard county school boards talking about all the data that they were having to provide to the Department of Education, I would have thought all of that was being compiled somewhere in the department and being used for a purpose, and, evidently, you are saying that it has not been?

SENATOR WITHEM: Yeah, I think it might be kind of interesting to look at one of the handouts that I passed out. We gather a lot of data now but it is fairly easily collected data, doesn't necessarily relate all that well to education quality sorts of issues. When we did this LR 181 study a couple of years ago, we asked school people what kind of data is important to you to make a determination on quality education, and they gave us several points. Then we looked at what is most important, what is least important. Then we looked at what kind of data is currently being gathered. The lists were kind of reversed. What we are now gathering isn't terribly important in making quality education determinations. What isn't being gathered is