

may...but we are providing an incentive to do that in case for school boards and for school administrators to do that very thing because we're going to fund it at a 100 percent rather than funding a local program at 60 to 65 percent. I think those are some of the things you should think about as we continue to talk about this bill. And if you have questions about that, I will be glad to answer those. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Hall.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Mr. President, and members, I rise to urge the body to advance LB 438. This is not an issue that is new to the body nor one that I think many members have not heard some debate on. The issue here is the students. It's not an issue of money and it's not an issue of territory or territorial rights with regard to what a school district should be able to do and what parents ought to be able to do. Senator Baack, it's probably a question of choice. And I guess do we allow funding to stand in the way of, you know, the ultimate choice with regard to what is available to students and to parents. And in the case of special education I think that the one barrier that we have seen for students who need the residential facility setting is that the cost for them to attend one of these two facilities is sometimes more than a school board is willing to fund. And that should not be a reason to take that choice away from that student because the idea for the schools is to provide the best setting for these students. The whole concept behind developing these schools over a 100 years ago, virtually, was that the students were the ones who were supposed to be taken care of and I think all we're doing through LB 438 is laying out that that is the duty and obligation of the state and we feel that if that is the most appropriate method of education, if that is the most appropriate care plan for these individuals, then it should be available to them and the state should fund it. The issue of multiple handicaps or other handicaps that are going to ask for residential facilities is not an issue at all because if you follow, and many of you do, the issues that revolve around the hearing impaired and the visually impaired, anymore they, clearly, are not just single handicaps that many of these students have. They tend to be multiple handicaps and we see each of these schools moving farther and farther into dealing with students who have more than just visual handicaps or hearing limitations. They are going farther and farther into expanding the type of student with these difficulties. And, yes, primarily, it's a visual handicap and, yes, primarily, it's