

that we have been burdened with for the last few months. I believe the bill ought to be on the floor. I believe it ought to be debated. I do not intend to use LB 188 for the purpose of selling the school lands. I intend to have it on the floor for the purpose, if you agree, of repealing the language which provides for in lieu of taxes. I have also written to the Attorney General and I have asked him, very frankly, to notify the appropriate officials that they should not continue to distribute the monies under the present statute. I was here when the bill was passed and we're going to be talking about a lot of other factors, about the sacredness of the school lands and the sacredness of the school trusts and the high performance of the Board of Lands and Funds. Let me tell you that back in the early seventies when myself and Senator DeCamp changed the law relative to school land rentals, we increased the income, as I recall, at that time from the school land rentals by almost eight times, from about a million and a half dollars to more than 12 million, just by requiring some ordinary factors of accounting to be used in determining the value of those school lands. The Legislature has acted responsibly several times over the last 20 years that I have been here relative to school lands. We did not act responsibly when we provided...when we passed the in lieu of tax legislation. You all, of course, are familiar with the fact that we had to pass a constitutional amendment so that the public power districts could pay in lieu of taxes. There was no constitutional amendment passed to provide for that with the school lands and, therefore, I suggest it is unconstitutional. We should bring 188 to the floor and we should repeal the provision which provides for the in lieu of tax payments to schools and we should do it this session. We should do that regardless of whether or not this Legislature takes another further responsible step, as I believe they should, and provide for the sale of school lands. Even if we were to provide for the sale of school lands, it would be done over a period of time when leases expire and we should not continue to compound the problem we have already created. Mr. President, I would turn the rest of my time over to Senator Withem.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes. How much time do I have, Mr. President? Thank you, Senator Baack.

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.