

May 15, 1989

LB 744

SENATOR CROSBY: The other...see, originally, too, a lot of the questions I get also have to do with the cost of it because they add that up and it does add up to more than a million over the four. Right?

SENATOR WITHEM: More than a million.

SENATOR CROSBY: Well, the figures on...the yearly figures...

SENATOR WITHEM: Oh, okay.

SENATOR CROSBY: ...for the cost. I mean, no matter where the money comes from or who pays it, people do...that sounds like a lot of money for them for this reason. And I will ask you this. This has been...this has been asked of me. Why do the local schools...isn't there any way that they already know who are in their classes and without taking some kind of test like this, why some students do better than others and does not the Department of Education gather any other information or have any other way of establishing these norms that you're looking for as to why students do better in certain things or do not?

SENATOR WITHEM: Yeah. First of all, I guess the dollar figure we are talking about, we spend roughly a billion dollars in elementary secondary education in this state and we have precious little knowledge about whether that investment of a billion dollars a year is an effective investment. I think that's an indictment and 26 percent of those dollars come from the state government. We, on the state level, do not know whether those dollars are successful for educating kids or whether they're not. So the dollar figure doesn't concern me. Secondly, are there other ways of achieving this? Yeah, there are and I guess I again point out that the NAEP test is not stipulated in LB 744. What is created in 744 is a creation of a data center, a creation of an advisory committee to determine what data needs to be collected and they and the department, together, will determine what the strategy is. So if there is a more effective way that is considered to be less intrusive, they will be able to do that.

SENATOR CROSBY: Now my other quick question and then if I have any time left, you can...

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.