

\$150,000 or more for a program that will benefit the students that are attending private schools is not a great threat to that public school system. I think it's a recognition of the fact that these schools help us as public policymakers in carrying out our goal of educating all of our young people in as efficient a fashion as possible. I'm going to be supporting the...Senator Hall's program that has been amended into the budget bill and will be working along with him and others that support this in opposition to the later Hannibal amendment, and also I am in support of this particular amendment. It appears as though there is no problem with this amendment and it needs to be adopted. I'd urge everybody to support this one and save their big guns for the battle later on with the attempts to remove this from the bill. But I think Senator Hall did a service to the state by getting his amendment adopted, and I would urge people to support him.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Hall, please, followed by Senator Langford and Senator Hannibal.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Mr. President and members. The issue is one of, as I guess Senator Hannibal put it, you know policy decision. And the policy decision, as he also stated, is one that we have battled for 18 years. It had its genesis in 1971. And it came to fruit, so to speak, three weeks ago when the Supreme Court said fine, there's no problem with the loaning, and that's all it is, loaning, because it is not for all practical purposes giving, but the loaning of textbooks and textbooks that they have available to them from the public school district that a private school finds itself in. The issue of what will the program cost has clearly been clouded because you listen to Senator Hannibal say that it could be up to \$3 million, but then for practical...for all practical purposes for the first couple of years it will be probably around a half million dollars. The fact of the matter is, ladies and gentlemen, the program will cost no more than the amount that we appropriate for it, plain and simple. We pay for it up front. It's an entitlement program, yes, but it's an entitlement program that has a cap on it. It's one that says you're entitled to this, but we capped you out, based on this amendment it will be approximately 123,000 the first year, and 140,000 the second year. It is capped so that there is no additional expense or not a running tab that the Department of Education comes in and says here's our deficit appropriation bill for the textbook loan program. Won't work that way. We