

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Warner, please, followed by Senator Langford and Senator Smith.

SENATOR WARNER: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, it seems to me that we are dealing with really two issues here, and there were two issues discussed in the committee when this amendment was adopted, both of which have been identified by previous speakers, both Senator Hannibal and Senator Schimek made some reference. There certainly is the policy issue, which is not insignificant. Yes, the statute was passed, it was...I would suspect it's not inaccurate to say that, and it certainly is well demonstrated in the...going back in the history of direct quotations that some of the legislation, at least, was enacted on a theory of a test case, which I suspect a number of people voted assuming that as a matter of constitutionality that the act would not meet that test, but it has. And so that issue is no longer before us. What it seems to me now is two issues, even though it is constitutional, how far should it be spread, the concept, because inevitably it will be spread more widely than books, I'm sure of that, than textbooks. But I think there is a very practical reason to do the funding for the rules and regs and establish it to start with. I have been asked from time to time, and I suspect others of you have asked the question, what is covered? Is it just textbooks, is it libraries, are there...are home schools covered? I believe they are. It isn't just private schools or parochial schools, it's also home schools, and that may all be a good policy, but in the absence of rules and regs being established there are a whole group of unknowns that it seems to me it will do nothing but create additional problems down the line until those things are established. And the basis then is not to stop anything but rather proceed orderly and get the rules and regs in place and then deal with the issue at the level of funding once those factors are known, which are not now known. I think it's a very reasonable approach that the committee amendment could be to Senator Hall's amendment could be adopted on that basis alone very logically. And, of course, there is still the issue of whether or not, as a broader policy issue that could be addressed as well. But I think it's excellent that we address the issue now because we're not going to be talking about...three years from now we will not be talking about 150,000, it will be a substantially different figure, I would suspect, and a much broader issue. And if that is the decision of the body that is fine, that is the route that we'll go. But it would be very helpful, it seems to me, that we start out on