

introduce a bill which will change that.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. The Chair recognizes Senator Withem, followed by Senators Schmit and Coordsen.

SENATOR WITHEM: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I guess I turned my light on because I felt it obligatory, if Senator Lamb is going to speak a couple of times I should, too. But I really don't have a lot new to add to the discussion, and neither did Senator Lamb. I think it's kind of interesting that the issues were...the arguments that we've heard are pretty similar to those that we've had over the years, let's not go too fast, let's maintain local control. I genuinely believe that with the committee amendments as we have them here today we can get beyond this issue. I also know for a fact, I know for a fact that, if this amendment is adopted, you folks are going to be back in the midst of the same type of ongoing controversy on school reorganization that you've had over the years that we've all gotten very weary of but it's a problem that is out there that we know we need to confront. I don't think there is a legislator who I have not spoken to privately that does not say, yeah, we need to grapple with this reorganization issue. It's one that's been hanging over our head too long, that we know that a state like Nebraska, with 900 plus school districts, with the types of tax levy variance that we have in this state, the system just doesn't make sense. You talk privately to business people, you talk privately to citizens, you talk privately to a lot of Class I residents, they know that the issue need to be dealt (sic) with. And I think the committee amendments will do that. The only other comment I want to comment on is Senator Haberman's reference to people out there don't know what is going on, that the game plan has changed, all of those kind of things. Just to repeat to the body I know it won't make any difference to Senator Haberman, my saying this, but it might to some of you who were listening to him, there's absolutely no reason for them not knowing what is going on. These amendments were presented at the committee hearing on 259, they were mailed out prior to the committee hearing. The committee members were told that we were going to be dealing with new issues. All of the interest groups in this area were told we were going to be dealing with these. Nothing has changed in these amendments since the committee hearing, and they should know what is going on. I know they don't all of the time, it's difficult to follow legislative procedure. That's no criticism of anybody. But this is not something new that I'm springing on people brand new