

understand what the intent is of this. I was busy filing another amendment and didn't hear your complete explanation, but this is the amendment that is designed basically to make sure that the Class III districts and the county reorganization committees don't stall the process out through July 1 of 1992 and then force the Class I's into a mandatory sort of merger. Is that what the intent of this is?

SENATOR DIERKS: Roughly, that's about right.

SENATOR WITHEM: Okay. Okay, thank you, Senator Dierks. If that is the intent of this as I read it also, again, I have no problem with that. It puts in language that strengthens the original intent. The original intent of affiliation is to say that a Class I school district wishing to remain open shall have a right to affiliate. Now there are some processes of petitioning this, of processing this petition to deal with levy shopping and some of those other things that Senator Smith was asking me about when we discussed this bill on General File. It is important that those processes be there, but they should not be the county reorg. committees or the Class IIs or IIIs should not have the rights to just drag their feet until the process is all completed and then say, well, you did not complete your affiliation by July 1 of '92 so we're going to...now the only choice is to force merge. What this does is puts a 60-day time limit in there so that they have to take some sort of action and I think...would hesitate to say what Senator Dierks, strengthen this bill, because he knows he wouldn't want me to say that this strengthens the bill, but I think it probably deals with a deficiency in the original drafting of the bill and I support it.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Any other discussion on the Dierks' amendment? Seeing none, Senator Dierks, to close.

SENATOR DIERKS: Well, very briefly, I don't object at all to being accused of helping to strengthen the bill because I think that whatever we do here should be strengthened whenever it's done, so I'd just urge the adoption of the amendment.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Those in favor of the adoption of the amendment please vote aye, opposed nay. Record, please.

CLERK: 27 ayes, 0 nays, Mr. President, on adoption of Senator Dierks' amendment.