

they basically supported the green copy of 259, was their basic purpose for being there. But they also said, if this will resolve the issue, this will get it off the agenda, this will stop the assault, let's go ahead and do it. I guess I'd also like to re...sometimes when a bill hits the floor it's the first time people have seen it, and two sides get at loggerheads over one particular issue, you kind of wonder why don't you give in on this issue, Ron, for crying out loud, this seems to be the only thing Howard wants. I guess I'd like to refer...go back in the days when 662 just passed, and talk about some of the things that have been given up by the pro reorganization people. Keep in mind this Legislature, at one time, went on very strong record supporting mandatory reorganization, merger, no more independent Class I school boards. We came in the next session, we had, by our vote count, anywhere between...at least 27, 28 very solid votes and probably enough soft votes to do an override of the veto of the Governor on LB 444. The Governor called me into her office and she said, I don't like dealing with this issue in this confrontation, this fashion. Would you, for me, get some people together and talk about this issue and try to resolve it and put 444 on hold? I did that. We could have had 444 passed, 444, I think, and I read it in retrospect, would have resulted in a lot of mandatory reorganization. We had a bill on Final Reading, ready to pass, ready to send to the Governor and probably the votes to go over her veto to put that in effect. But we gave that up. We said, okay, we'll do it, it's more important to solve the issue. We got the people together and with the idea in my mind anyway, we're going to negotiate how Class I's will phase themselves out. Well, it was pretty apparent I was very naive in that, it was pretty apparent they weren't going to do that. Very shortly on we said, okay, our goal is not to phase you out, and get you out of existence. Our goal is to let...to find a system where you can maintain your identity. Then we got into the affiliation concept, and the pro reorganization people said, well you've got to have a Class I district affiliate itself in total with a Class II or III or it won't work. The Class I's said, that's a very important topic to us, we have to have, we have to have the ability to go in different directions. We gave in on that point. There is a whole litany of other issues I could tell you that we have given in on over the years, just here today, the time line, there is no reason to give in on the time line. We gave in on the time line. There is no particular need to support the Dierks amendment, we supported the Dierks amendment.