

chance to familiarize myself with the bill but I guess a question relative to grants. Senator Withem, can you tell me what the grant system will do? As I recall, we discussed it just a little bit last year and why the grant system and the amount of the grants and why they will be able to do with the grants what we cannot do with the existing system?

SENATOR WITHEM: Number one, they're not doing it with the existing system, Senator Schmit, that the...most of the schools in the state, I think, are relatively comfortable in what it is they are doing and they aren't really examining what it is that they do to educate kids, and I think they need to do that. That's...the main reason for the grants is to provide an incentive for school districts to do some of the things that probably you and I might agree they should be doing anyway but probably isn't happening.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Thank you, Senator. I guess that I have no real particular problem with the goal of the bill. One of my concerns is that business and industry in agriculture, all private enterprise operations, learn to adjust and adapt or else you go out of business. You lose your market and...or else you become inefficient and your competitor takes over. It would seem to me that looking back over the years that many of our schools have recognized that there is a need to adapt and change and the schools themselves, the educational institutions themselves ought to be in the forefront recognizing the need for change and the need for reform and the need for new curriculum and new programs. And, of course, one of the concerns that I have is a concern that has been expressed, I believe, by the commission that studied the educational system in Texas where they found that a large portion of the problem that faced the schools was the fact that the children didn't know how to read and write and spell and, until they learned that, they weren't able to use the very modern mechanisms that today are available to them. And as I look at the young folks in the front row here, I don't know, I'm sure they are all excellent spellers and excellent in math and all the rest of those skills but I really am concerned because in recent weeks I have had occasion to hire some new people and I am not at all pleased with the ordinary writing ability, the ordinary spelling ability of those individuals. When an individual fills out just a very modest kind of an application and you find numerous misspelled words, and I don't mean words like "ecclesiastical", I mean ordinary, every day words in that kind of an application, I guess, I have