

SENATOR BAACK: Yes, Mr. President and colleagues, this amendment is...it has two things that this amendment does. One of them, the first thing that it does is it incorporates LB 1051 which was a bill that was introduced by Senator Hartnett into the Education Committee, to the Education Committee and was also approved by the Education Committee and there was no opposition to this bill also at the hearing. What this bill does is that the...it says that if a child is involved in special education in this state, the state law right now provides that if they turn 21 during the school year, state law says that their services can be terminated immediately as they turn 21. This has presented some problems across the state because if their birthday is in October then services can end that very day and in some students' cases this has happened. And what this amendment says is that they will be allowed to continue to receive those services through the school year in which their twenty-first birthday occurs. If it occurs during that year, they will be allowed to have services until the end of the year. So I think this is just a very reasonable thing that we should do. I helped carry the amendment with Senator Hartnett. This is a bill that I introduced before the Education Committee a number of years ago and we did not have time to act on that. The other change, the other change that is in this bill is one that was brought to me by some special ed people in the Omaha area and they have had a problem because with special ed they have to furnish transportation. They have a choice of either furnishing it with a bus or they can pay the parents to transport those children. And what they have found that, in trying to paying the parents to transport them, there is a state statute that says that parents can only be reimbursed for 86 percent of the allowable rate for special ed students. All other transportation is 100 percent of the rate. What we're asking to do here is to change that and say that they can reimburse parents for 100 percent of the allowable mileage rate and this will...because in many cases it is much easier for them to simply pay the parents to transport those kids and the parents are more willing to do it if they are able to receive 100 percent of the allowance for transportation rather than the 86 percent that is provided in state law right now. I will now let Senator Hartnett have the rest of my time.

SENATOR HARTNETT: Mr. President, members of the body...

PRESIDENT: Senator Hartnett.