

SENATOR SCHELLPEPER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and members, I do not like lids. I just...my opinion is that lids do not work. I think you have locally elected officials and that's where you should...they're the ones I guess that should be making that decision. But I think if we don't do anything with this bill with a lid, we are going to have the 2 percent Jaksha lid. I just am convinced that he has the signatures and that they will be adopted. I think by adopting a lid here and extending it to three years, that may stop the other lid, but lids do not work. I just think that local officials, elected officials are the ones that should be doing it, but I don't think we have that right right now because I think we have this other lid that is going to be looking us in the eye and if we don't do something, we will have that, so I guess we have to go this route so I will support the Hefner amendment at this time. Senator Withem will have the rest of my time.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, thank you, Senator Schellpeper, for your courtesy here. I did want to get my two cents worth in on this. I have maybe a little different perspective on the concept of budget limitations and on Senator Hefner's amendment. The one thing that I don't think is clear in everybody's mind is if we move to this formula that's in the bill, budget limitations are a necessity not just in the short term, not just because of another lid proposal out there that we may like less, but because with this proposal if we are underwriting, guaranteeing the support of education at the 45 percent level, not just for a year, not just for a one-time shift, but ideally in perpetuity, we have to have a say over how much is spent. The analogy that I've used and I think is a good one is if you are asked to sign as one of two parties on a two-party check, you're darned sure going to want to have some input on what the numbers will be for the check, and that is what we're doing with this bill. We're committing ourselves to funding on an ongoing basis at a 45 percent level. We need to have some say in what that 45 percent level should be, whether it needs to be 4 percent forever, you know, I don't know, and I think Senator Hefner is indicating he doesn't know either whether it should stay there. The intent of this bill, the intent of the report from the commission was that there would be an ongoing budget limitation and it would be revisited every time we make an appropriation, we determine whether it is too tight or it is too loose, whether