

established in this bill, to report back on what particular concerns they may have. Now for people who say, well, the best way to kill a proposal is to study it, I would ask you to take a look at what is happened with this bill. This bill is a study. You know, we take things fairly seriously that we do study. Senator Baack's proposal last year to study choice has resulted in his priority bill this year. Second point in this amendment is we have kind of taken to calling it a hold harmful amendment as opposed to hold harmless. We do think it is a good philosophical position, that there ought to be some degree of local support for schools. What we're pegging that at is 60 percent of the minimum effort levy ought to be levied at the local level before...a district should not be able to get state aid sufficient to put its local property tax down lower than 60 percent of the minimum levy. Might also point out to you that this, in effect, frees up some state aid dollars that would have flowed out to those districts, would receive a tremendous amount of state aid and it will come back within the system in many ways. It will end up paying for the increased costs of the hold harmless. Final, with special education I think one of the things we need to recognize on this special education, if we're dealing with local property taxes, and that's what we're concerned about capping, special education money is allocated from the state government. Local school districts really have very little control over their special ed budgets, particularly some of the legislation that has been passed in here. I think Senator Baack chaired a committee looking at special ed and he may want to address this a little further in closing. Local school districts really have little impact on their special ed budgets. If a number of families were to move in that had special ed students and it became the responsibility of those local school districts to educate them and they had to do it within the lid established in the bill for all programs, they would have to cut existing programs. So the special ed is a different sort of program because it is funded, 90 percent of the excess costs are funded at the state level so it seems appropriate that there ought to be a differing standard for special education. I think it's a good amendment. I think it improves the bill and I would urge you to support it.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Kristensen, please, followed by Senator Moore and Senator Haberman.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body, I, too, rise and supported this amendment and co-signed it