

excused, and the question is, shall the Smith amendment be reconsidered? All in favor respond to the Clerk on a roll call vote aye, opposed nay. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: (Roll call vote taken. See pages 1546-47 of the Legislative Journal.) 21 ayes, 25 nays, Mr. President, on the motion to reconsider.

PRESIDENT: The Smith amendment will not be reconsidered. Anything further on it, Mr. Clerk?

CLERK: Mr. President, I have nothing further on the bill at this time.

PRESIDENT: We are back on the bill, believe it or not. Senator Withem, would you like to speak on the advancement of the bill? The call is raised.

SENATOR WITHEM: I would just ask for a voice vote to advance the bill.

PRESIDENT: There happen to be a couple of other lights on.

SENATOR WITHEM: Oh, okay. Yeah, I will speak very briefly, Mr. President. I appreciate very much your giving me the opportunity to do so. We have before us now a very major piece of legislation. We also have before us, as a body, tremendous pressures that are being put on us not to act on this proposition. You have been told all morning, and from opponents on the floor, you have been getting letters from people like the Omaha Chamber of Commerce, ConAgra, of all people, ConAgra, you know, has the best interest of the state at heart, the State Chamber of Commerce, giving you reasons why not to vote for this bill, and I think because we spent so much time talking, focusing on the specifics of the bill, it might not be a bad idea to start the discussion by talking about why we need to pass this bill, and what will happen if we don't. What will happen if we don't act on this piece of legislation? What will happen, if we, as a Legislature, do not do what we need to do by addressing the crisis we have in this state in the way in which we fund education? If that is an amendment on the desk, I'd, you know, defer and let us take up the amendment, if there is going to be one filed. No, okay, okay. What we have right now is a situation where we have a variance in the amount of dollars that are spent per pupil between school districts of better than