

PRESIDENT MOUL: Senator Dierks.

SENATOR DIERKS: Thank you, Madam President and Senator Nelson. I told Senator Rasmussen after the hearing the other day that I thought she did an exemplary job of presenting her bill and I am one who was guilty of voting to IPP that piece of legislation in committee. I have a feeling that one should start out the way he intends to finish up on these pieces of legislation and, at the point that we were asked to support this legislation, I couldn't see that the funding was available and I elected to not support it. Now I do believe that the bill has very exemplary items and I don't take issue with what Senator Rasmussen is trying to do with this legislation, I think it's an excellent piece of legislation. I just have, I think a sense of realism that says we don't have a shot at it this year and I, like I say, it's hard for me to support something in the beginning that I cannot support in the end, so that constitutes the reason for my vote in the negative there. I think it's, of course, it's up to the rest of the body to make your own determination on that score and that's why it's here today. You have that opportunity now. I think that it's just a shame that we have an awful lot of really good pieces of legislation out there today that are not going to be coming to fruition this year because of the budget crunch that we have and there again, I believe we just have to come up with some realism. I keep hearing that we should be looking at innovative ways to fund these things and after a while you kind of run out of innovations. I think that I would just have...the last thing I'd like to say is that, you know, we just...as much as we like some of these bills, we just cannot support them from the standpoint of realism, so I'll turn the rest of my time back to Senator Nelson.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Senator Nelson.

SENATOR NELSON: Madam President, I, too, could not support the bill out of Education Committee and I must also take the same stand on the floor. First place is, I do want to commend Senator Rasmussen. She is trying to address many, many needs that all of us need to address, that is educational goals, maybe get more grants, early childhood education, a tremendous need; at risk students, more critical thinking, very, very important. I commend her for coming down this long, long list and she is a very difficult one to even try to outtalk being a new senator. Give her another year or two and it'll be terrible. But anyhow,