

at the expense of education to children. I think that our main goal needs to make sure that we are making, that we are getting the best educational opportunity for the students out there and I think when you get a school that drops below 25 and that number was set a number of years ago, I think that you are on the margins right there, right then and there of having a good educational opportunity for those students. I think the Legislature made a mistake a number of years ago when they allowed them three years, to be under 25 for three years in a row. That seemed to me that what the Legislature was saying at that point was, well, we will let it get below 25, those kids aren't being afforded a good educational opportunity, but we're going to let those kids still suffer for two more years and then we're going to close them down. I think that is absolutely ridiculous. As far as I'm concerned, if they get below 25, they ought to be closed down and not have three years, not have three years leeway. I would hate to see a situation where we had a couple of towns, maybe 10, 12 miles apart, one had 12 kids, one had 13 and we're going to sit here as a state and we're going to say, okay, that's an accredited school because they have a cooperative program. I simply could not support that kind of a situation. I want to see those communities remain viable, but I don't think that you do it at the expense of children and I think if we adopt this amendment we are saying the most important thing is to keep the community going; we're not saying the most important thing is education and I still think that should be our goal. The most important thing is the educational opportunity for children. Thank you.

SENATOR WARNER: Senator Nelson.

SENATOR NELSON: Mr. Speaker, I hesitate to rise, my good friend, Senator Schrock, and if I could help him out in any way I would, but common sense tells me this is not the right approach too. I did think I'd just keep my mouth shut and sit back, but I don't think that is the way to do it either. I visited with some gentlemen from Senator Schrock's area this morning. They are very sincere and I feel sorry for them and the education of their children, but I'm truly like Senator Baack. Education should come first. I find out that there are only 10 miles between towns and I had to ask them. They probably cruise the roads at 50 miles every weekend and think nothing of it and I don't really consider that too far and if we make it too easy, we'll never address the actual education of the children and when you have only two and three, four or eight