

talk about accountability. I'd like to ask any of you senators, when's the last time you talked, Senator Hefner, when's the last time you talked to Bill Schnoor up there at Coleridge, I think it was, and said, how often do you evaluate these teachers? You ought to ask him, Bill, can you tell me, tell me who your best teachers are and tell me why, or talk to your high school principal. We got...we should have evalu...we got evaluators out there. If they're not being evaluated by their superintendents and principals, that's our fault, that's our school board's fault. If the school boards start moaning and groaning to you, say, that's your job, that's what you run for. Our people are getting evaluated out there, some of them probably good and some of them probably very poorly, but that has no...that's no reason at this time we should give 5 million dollars to performance based when we're down. We're 39th to 40th lowest average teacher salary. That's one thing you forget, and we're a much richer state. I would urge you, all of you, to oppose Senator Hefner's motion.

PRESIDENT MOUL: One minute. Thank you, Senator Robinson. Senator Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, Madam Chairman and members of the body. Even though this performance base concept is a plan that I had worked on and worked hard to get added to the bill, I am not going to be supporting Senator Hefner's amendment at this time. My rationale is one of, one of the things that I have learned about change in the education system, education environment is, although Senator Nelson is right and Senator Hefner is right and everybody is right we need to make some changes, and I think moving toward some type of performance base is an important change to make, it is not one that can be implemented immediately from the top and have it work. The changes need to be given a little time to percolate down for the people at the bottom of the pyramid that we normally deal with to get used to working with it and have their ideas percolate back up. I think that the compromise that we arrived at, with some fairly hard head knocking with, and a lot of times it was my head that was being knocked, to come up with a plan that is now in the bill to start us along this road to performance based is probably as good as we can go this year and it is probably the best policy to have this performance based as something that we will be implemented in the future, give a little time for those teachers to get used to the fact that it is going to be coming down their way. For that reason I am going to be voting against the Hefner