

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, Madam President, this amendment simply adds the emergency clause so that the bill can get implemented in a quicker fashion. Thought of another maybe a better answer to what I would suggest to Senator Beutler might be better operating procedure for us as a Legislature. When individual members of the Legislature, between now and 1996, have good ideas for interim steps in this accountability process, I would suggest that those not be foreclosed simply because this process is going on, but that as this process goes on we use whatever benchmarks that process has created, down the road, as kind of a check point so that if we come in with interim steps that move the state in a radically different direction than this process is going, that we suggest we not do that. But as long as those interim steps are complimentary to the process that is being created by this commission that we would, as a Legislature, adopt those. I think that might be something to, obviously can't bind anybody to do that, but that will be the judgment I will be using in evaluating any interim step sorts of things. With that, would move the adoption of this amendment and the adoption of the emergency clause.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Withem. Senator Abboud.

SENATOR ABOUD: Yes, Madam President. I feel that, as I spoke on General File on this particular piece of legislation, I think it's an important step forward in looking at the questions of educational quality in this state. When I first entered the Legislature, ten years ago, there was a great deal of discussion about increasing the quality of educational standards that we had in public education in this state. And that particular definition of educational quality improvement is sometimes elusive. Sometimes we view increasing the quality of education as simply putting additional tax dollars into our educational system. And I think we can all agree that there is need for improvement. And one of the basic problems is, and I know Senator Withem doesn't want to talk about that one bill that we passed a couple years ago, so I won't mention its number, but we did put a great deal of money into public education, and it did go to different school districts around the state. But when we looked back on it, two years later, can we say that the quality of education was increased by that additional money being put into those school systems? And, more importantly, was a particular school district's quality increased over another school district because of them getting additional funding?