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SENATOR ASHFORD: I'm sorry, Madam President. Just very briefly, I certainly knew that this amendment was coming and as of yesterday I guess. It...I have some...Senator Bernard-Stevens, could I ask you a question, please.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Certainly.

SENATOR ASHFORD: Just if you would, other than the macro, micro explanation, could you give me a more fuller explanation for the record of why this is a germane amendment?

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Senator Ashford, I don't want to beat around the bush and say one thing and we all know it's another. In essence, this is a bill that is very important, 1123. It got lost in the shuffle at some point. This is the best vehicle for that concept of 1123 to pass this session. This is the only vehicle, this is the best vehicle, this is the only chance we have to do that. I am making the best effort I can knowing that we would have a germaneness fight. What I'm going to do is say I understand, there is a broad sense of the term where I can argue it's educational base, we're using tax monies, we're shifting it to schools which is what your 1272 would do, we're talking about different areas obviously. Senator Warner is going to say we are definitely talking about two different areas so he's arguing it's not germane. I am simply saying I think it's the issue that we must address this issue and this is the vehicle that I have to use to get that accomplished and this is the method of operation procedurally I have to go through.

SENATOR ASHFORD: Thank you, Senator Bernard-Stevens. Here's my concern, and I understand that it's a very important issue and it's an appropriation that I support, but my problem is this. We, and I have to listen to the debate and make a decision because I haven't made a decision at this point, but we have a firm public policy established in 1272 and that is we have a program that has gone beyond its original boundaries. It's public policy is no longer being served adequately and that we have made a cut in spending in order to provide for some very, very needed programs to come into effect. The early childhood education program is one that we've been trying to get into this Legislature since I've been here for four years. The domestic violence program is a very important program to me and one that we had in the budget last year and was cut. With the 1272 cut