

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. The Chair recognizes Senator Hartnett to open on the LB 159.

SENATOR HARTNETT: Madam Chairman and members of the body, what 159 would do is provide a little flexibility as far as a textbook loan program for private schools. It simply refines what we do right now. The current status as interpreted states that parents of nonpublic schools may only borrow from the list of textbooks used by the public schools of their residence. However, public school districts are not the same as nonpublic attendance patterns. It is not uncommon for nonpublic schools to have children enrolled who are residents of two or more public school districts. By definition a textbook means a book that is designated for use in the classroom instruction as a principal source of study material. It only makes sense that children in the same class should be able to borrow the same textbook. LB 159 would add this necessary element of commonality and therefore allow the program to work in a more realistic and efficient manner. Once again, textbooks are parental loan requests may only be purchased to the extent that funding is appropriated up front and presently that is done through the appropriation process, about \$162. There is no local budget obligation. The school district serves only as a purchasing and loaning agent for the state program and by rules are allowed to claim additional 5 percent of the requested amount for fees for admission. That is going to go up to 50 cents per textbook. It simply allows that we right now, as the way the program is set up, some people are disenfranchised because the school districts where private schools are attracted are not the same boundaries as the parochial school attendance area. So what it does is simply provides some flexibility and if there is any questions, I'd ask the bill be advanced.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Hartnett. The Chair recognizes Senator Schellpeper.

SENATOR SCHELLPEPER: Yes, Madam Chairman and members, I'd like to ask Senator Hartnett a question if I might.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Hartnett.

SENATOR SCHELLPEPER: Senator, you say there is no local budget obligation, I currently have a school in my district that also has a private school and they had to budget \$12,000 for