

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Senator Maurstad. Senator Bernard-Stevens, your light is next.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Mr. President, members of the body, the only thing I want to do at this time, we are right before noon and I assume we will carry on this discussion starting this afternoon, is just to philosophically talk about Internet, and to ask the question when we put \$2.5 million for the schools to do this, has anyone asked the question of whether or not the educational gain from Internet is worth the dollars that we are putting in. And the reason I say that, and I am not necessarily at this point opposed to Senator Robinson's bill. In fact, as he and I have talked earlier, I have been very supportive of the concept, but the one thing that does trouble me is that when I was in education, I remember when the VCR came out, and we had the VCR, and the big, big excitement was that if we are going to have VCRs in every classroom, think of the marvelous things that could be done in the classrooms. You could have Milton Friedman talk, in his Freedom to Choose theory, about economic theories about how the country and the world interrelate, and the federal reserve, and so on, and you could bring him right into the classroom, and think what happens when you have video tapes of the Constitutional Convention. You could have those, put them in the VCR, and some of the best thinkers of the world could be right there in the classrooms. Well, what happened was everybody got on the VCRs and everyone got into the technology craze of the time, and you pretty soon found the VCRs were shoved over into the corner because while Milton Friedman may have talked about his Freedom to Choose theory that may have been very good, unfortunately, the students (a) did not understand, or (b) they fell asleep because it was not...he was not a teacher, for the most part, could not keep the interest. And you found that over a period of time that the VCR was used from time to time, and quite often for good things, but it never reached the potential of educational value that they thought. Now you have Internet, and for those members that have been down in my office all know that the computers that I have, we...you know, that I have done on my own, we are hooked up to Internet in our office. I have been exploring the Internet, surfing the net, which is the phrase that people use, and it is fascinating. There are lots of things there, but I have to ask myself the question, if I were a classroom teacher, and I had the ability to hook up to Internet, what would I actually be able to use in my classroom, K-12, that would be so advantageous, given to me because of Internet, that I couldn't have or wouldn't be able to