

strike the original committee amendments, adding transportation under the lid and let me briefly go through what is included in the committee amendments and then I would be pleased to answer any questions you might have. LB 742 was introduced with a flat cap on special education growth beginning next year, capping the amount the state would reimburse school districts, through its process, to the same amount that it would be spending this year and that would be about 122 million. The committee, after the hearing, decided to change that to allow for growth at the same average rate of general education beginning in the year 1996. The Pages will be distributing some materials for you but the page you may want to refer to is the one-page sheet with the time line. The time line on the left is basically what we'll be talking about here in the amendment to the amendment. Beginning then in 1996 and '97 we will allow special education rates or cost to grow at the same rate as general education which has averaged about somewhere between four and 6 percent. This is an attempt to get special education down from the 10.3 percent rate of growth that we've been experiencing yearly. The 10 percent growth factor began a number of years ago, and in fact if we do not do something about that rate, we will double the amount of money the state uses to reimburse special education again in five years. That's the first thing that the amendment does. It allows for that rate of growth to match the rate of general education. The second thing it clarifies is that transportation should be included in that cap, the transportation that is required in state statute for special education. It also then clarifies that this cap does not affect Level I services in this year, '94-95, but would begin then in the following years, '95-96. And finally it allows that, I believe those are the two things it does. We do have a following amendment that will talk about the reform effort that was clearly suggested at the hearing. If we are in fact going to try to limit the amount of money spent by the state for special education, we heard clearly from people at the hearing that something has to change. There will be an amendment following that attempts to create a study process. That is the other line on the time line that is called the reform effort and it's a way to look to find some relief in the increased cost of special education and in maintaining that those students who qualify for special education retain those civil rights that they have fought long and hard to have, that in fact we are delivering the same high quality of services that have been delivered in Nebraska since the beginning of special education programming, but that we are guaranteeing more flexibility to the local district, less rigid regulation and