

April 19, 1995

LB 742

are now on General File debating LB 742. Senator Pedersen is up. Senator Pedersen.

SENATOR PEDERSEN: Senator Landis and members of the Legislature, Senator McKenzie, would you submit to a couple of questions, please?

SENATOR LANDIS: Senator McKenzie, would you yield to a question?

SENATOR MCKENZIE: Yes, Senator Pedersen.

SENATOR LANDIS: Senator Pedersen, you may continue.

SENATOR PEDERSEN: My questions are around the block grant and I don't know if you talked about this or if you talked to the people in this area. But I've got a couple of small school districts in my district of Bennington-Elkhorn and part of the Gretna school district is in my legislative district and then I've got a couple big school districts, Omaha and Millard. But for instance, the program at Westside in Omaha has a Cadillac of a program, really a good program going, and then schools like Elkhorn and Bennington are just getting started. Is there any talk about how that is going to be distributed as far as to hope that we can get these programs going better or is it going to be just across-the-board type blocks or could you answer that, please?

SENATOR MCKENZIE: Senator Pedersen, those are all the questions that we are asking the Special Education Accountability Commission to address. When we look at moving from one system which is basically reimbursement a year in arrears, and I mean superintendents have complained about that for a long time. If you have a child move in, in September, who is costing your district \$100,000, you do not get that reimbursement until the following year. Moving to the block grant approach would provide the district some amount of money at the beginning of the year and those are all the things that we're asking the Special Education Accountability Commission and the School Finance Review Committee to recommend. And we have to look at what happens if it's a Class I district, what happens if it's an Elkhorn, what happens if it's a Gretna and they are experiencing rapid growth, many, many students moving in? Those are the things we are asking the Accountability Commission to recommend and we're asking that because they have spent the last year