

effect? My understanding of what you said is that you would want the cap to take effect and then you mentioned something about growth. That's what I would like you to clarify for me but don't take all my time.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: I have also punched my light on so if we need more time we can have it. Senator Chambers, what I'm trying to get across is I believe in the concept as an entire package, but the concept that I'm more comfortable with, I was not comfortable with the flat cap. I would have voted to kill that bill on just a flat cap, that's it. It was irresponsible I think. It did not address any of the issue and it simply dumped upon the state the responsibility to the local level which are hamstrung anyway. I am comfortable with a cap that's tied into growth that also when you go on the time line and you go over the last portion of that funding mechanism, where that portion then would be...the cap would be repealed and the Legislature then would establish what the proper funding would be, which we talked about earlier, with a very negative child oriented Legislature may be lower or if we had a very pro special education, pro Legislature, proactive Legislature, might be higher. I'm more comfortable with that.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Okay, now, Senator Bernard-Stevens, how much time will elapse between when this bill will take effect, if it's passed, and when the cap ceases to be?

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: As the bill is written now the...where it ceases to be would be the year '97-98.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Now what could happen between the time this bill takes effect and '97-98 to special education students if more legitimately needs to be spent than the amount allowed under the cap? There would have to be a prorating, wouldn't there where you say we have this amount, it's not enough to meet the needs of these students, so we're going to have to find some way to divide it up.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: I believe, again, not to dodge the question, but I believe as we go further on the bill on Select File I think what you will find is that the amount that we're spending now is the cap and I think what you'll find is that there will be an amendment that we will agree to and again maybe not in which case we'll have to review this answer, but if we do agree with the amendment that would actually put the growth in