

because it's not going to be done until early summer. But the reason we voted to continue was to review the project and see how it had progressed. I think all of us anticipated there was going to be a change. And it seems to me that the change that is proposed here in Senator Robinson's amendment is appropriate and one which is a better use for these same dollars in the long run. I want to say one of the reasons it occurred to me to be consistent is I also think there is some merit to the concept of a grant to be paid back over time in some instances could be very appropriate, but then it also occurred to me that paying it back perhaps would be a draw on property tax as well, over time, instead of all at one time. And on that basis I think the concept that's contained in Senator Robinson's amendment is probably a more appropriate course than is the issue at this time. Although conceptually I can see where the concept of grants, similar to weatherization or loans, similar to what weatherization, has had some merit to expedite something occurring allowed to be paid over time with no interest, but not withstanding that I would still be in support...opposed to Senator Wickersham's amendment as it now stands and in support of what Senator Robinson is offering.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Senator Warner. Senator Wickersham.

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: Thank you, Madam President. I'll confess that I wasn't quite listening to everything that Senator Warner said, it's not out of disrespect to Senator Warner, but I was muddling around in my mind some other thoughts and discussing other issues. One of the things that occurs to me as we're discussing this issue is that if grant...if the Robinson amendment isn't changed and if we fund these...this program through grants that those grant funds will be an accountable receipt to the school districts that receive them. Now when I use the words accountable receipts some of you will perk up your ears because those are code words for 1059 aid. And if you're an equalization district the grant would actually reduce your 1059 aid and increase your property taxes. Now, I don't know how many people would worry about that as an effect, maybe an unintended effect of having a grant program for a laudable objective, but it's beginning to cause me some pause and to allow me to suggest to you that it's another argument against the grant program and that we would be better served if we're going to do this to have the program operate as a loan fund. The loans would certainly not be accountable receipts by the school districts. It is true that the payback over time might