

want to go ahead and have a very tight lid with this included and for them then to meet that lid requirement, to meet the CIR, they take funding out of the general education programs, and we said, as a body, no, we don't want to do that. And capital construction speaks for itself as far as what the costs would be and what that would mean to any school district's budget that were included. So Senator McKenzie rightfully points out all of the areas that are exempt that makes the lid a little more nebulous when we think of what an absolute lid would be, but she makes the point of why education has to be treated differently. And one of the problems we have in trying to deal with lids is we're going to begin with 613 to blur our battles on property tax and policy and we're going to blur that proposal in with school finance. And Senator Withem's amendment, and I hope he takes it to a vote and I hope it's voted for, Senator Withem's amendment simply says, look, we understand the lids on the property tax battles and we also understand that we, as a Legislature, and the executive branch have responsibilities and decisions we have to make on school funding and we...what Senator Withem's amendment does is take the school portion out and keeps it as it is now. Now I think Senator Withem may have misspoke. If his amendment is agreed to the range would be between 4 and 6.5 as it is now. That would be the range on school districts. We have a lot of problems on school finance that we're not going to be able to get to this session. One of the things I think that would be very harmful to the whole discussion of school finance is to go ahead and, because we have a general policy question on lids and we want to lower lids on property tax, to go ahead and lower then the schools' lids to the, well, I think it's be 3.5 to 5...3 to 5.5 or whatever the range would be under 613. If you do that again you have to ask yourselves the key question. Since all of these other things are exempt, what's going to go in education and is that the type of policy that we want right now?

SENATOR CROSBY: One minute.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: I think that what Senator Withem's proposed, and I'll talk about it a little bit later, is saying, look, we will keep school funding separate and then we, as a Legislature, have some tough decisions to make. We're not following 1059 as we should. We're not setting annually the growth rate. We're not demanding that the Governor give us a proposal. Excuse me. Senator Withem's going to get to that if you people haven't read that line so I'll save that one because