

they've had some great successes and Senator Witek's trying to eliminate a program that I think has been a valuable one. I would ask your opposition to the Witek amendment. I wish to continue this and allow these programs to go forward and then use them as a basis to have other programs in other school districts go forward. So, again, I stand in opposition to the Witek amendment.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Witek.

SENATOR WITEK: Madam Chairman, members of the body, I am not opposed to early childhood education. Both of my children attended preschool, each of them for two years, before kindergarten. I never did attend preschool. At that time, it was not... it was not very...we didn't have preschool from what I can remember. Our preschool was at home and that's probably exactly what we did, Senator Crosby, was with ten brothers and sisters we just played in a room together. And I understand that some people feel that there's a tremendous need for preschool, the getting children ready for kindergarten kind of thinking, although a lot of that is accomplished within the neighborhoods and the communities without the state becoming involved. These are good projects that would... were started and they can continue, especially with the support I see from some of the senators on the floor. I'm sure you'll get involved. I know Senator Hillman's got one in her area. There's one in Omaha area. You can get involved in these projects. You can raise funds through the community. You can even get them like we do in Millard, 2 million dollars for early childhood out of your budgets, from your own community budgets, but what I am saying is you don't need to come to the state for it. You don't need to come to the state for half a million dollars for some one or two or three or four schools in the State of Nebraska. I could have a very successful preschool for 125,000 dollars state money too. I know there's a preschool pilot project in Omaha right now with money from the business community that is really paying some... some high salaries to the individuals involved in that and it's my concern that when you get those types of large grants from the state and you filter that into the private community market system of early childhood education or preschool then you... you have it off-kilter from the market. You kind of throw a wrench into the market system there for what people can afford in the community, what kind of quality is in the preschools. Those types of things change when you... when you put state funding into it. I