

that, in fact, we aren't expanding the definition to include a group of other kids. The most significant change in this amendment, other than a number of other technical changes in terms of language and rearranging some of the bill, we have extended the time period for the study. Looking at the time period in the original legislation, we would have allowed the State School Board and Department of Education, the Special Education Accountability Commission, the School Finance Review Committee and the Education Committee only four months of study to come back to the Legislature in November of this year with significant recommendations for reform of the system. That is really quite unrealistic, in my thinking, and I think in many of the rest of your thinking, so we've extended that time line to ask for those recommendations to come back to the committee of the Legisla...Education Committee of the Legislature in June 1st of 1996. That will allow us then a month or six weeks of time to put together the drafting committee who then can put together some first draft of legislation for reform that we can take out next legislative interim for input from the public and from general education and from parents and special education interest groups as well. The other significant change in the amendment is that we have eliminated the flat year, what was the zero percent cap. If you recall, in the first round of debate on 742, we had included a flat year. This year's projected cost for special education, which will be paid out, is about 122 million. We had a flat year in there saying the state would contribute no more than 122 million, and instead of saying let's hold it there, we're saying, looking at all the factors, that's probably not realistic, that we believe schools can hold spending in that year at the same rate and level that they are holding...that they are spending this year. So the growth rate that we had originally included the year after is allowed to take place one year sooner. That's why when you've read the paper you've heard the discussion about is it a 12 million dollar savings or a six million dollar savings in the special education bill. This amendment includes only \$6 million in savings, not the full 12. Senator Bernard-Stevens, would you like to use some of the opening?

SENATOR HALL: Senator Bernard-Stevens, you are recognized. You have approximately five minutes.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Senator Hall. I won't need all of that time. I appreciate all of the work, certainly, that Senator McKenzie and others have put in on this particular