

legislation is going to take a lot more time than people realize because it is a lot more complicated. But I will see if I can simplify my opposition down into a five-minute portion here. Number one, the reason I do not want to suspend the rules is because this amendment is not necessary at this time. If you look at what happened in Washington, they passed a law in gun con...in the school area for, if you read the areas, requiring expulsion for violation of a weapons law. And this is not...this has nothing to do with getting tough on crime in schools. This issue is not a part of that. So I want to make that very clear. I don't want guns in schools. I think we need to have very strong policies. This is not what this is about. The federal government passed a law saying that school districts in every state must have a punishment of an expulsion if...when a student knowingly and willfully violates the gun laws, and that punishment would be expulsion for one year. Now prior to that, most of the decisions that have been made at the federal level in education always stated the school year, the calendar school year. There was no...if people go back and check the Congressional record as far as what the debate was during the time period of this, they'll find there was no discussion about what this term meant, year. In fact, I think it was even assumed that it meant school year. What then happened, in my judgment, is some people began to panic, and some of the lower level bureaucrats in Washington were asked the question, they answered in this regular bureaucratese formula that they have, and that is they just assume that these things may be true, and what they told Nebraska was, you know, if you don't have the...if you don't have the calendar year in, you may lose \$36 million, and then everyone panicked. Oh, my gosh, we can't do that. Well, we are going to get into the discussions why that is not necessarily as fearful as what it may look like, but, remember, most importantly, what we need to have and what we don't have is what does the law mean. And what Senator Bohlke would have us do with this amendment, if we suspend the rules, is to say we don't care if it is a good rule or not, we are scared to death that this might happen, so let's go ahead and do this because we don't want to lose the dollars. What my position at least has been on this particular bill is that a calendar year is nuts, absolutely ludicrous. Take an example of a student that has an infraction, and it may be a relatively meaningless infraction that...the last two weeks of a semester. If you go ahead and expel the kid for a calendar year, technically, that could be three semesters. So when we talk about juvenile justice, and we talk about getting the kids the