

the rate of the growth in general education. So what we're doing is basically this bill when it was...when it started out on General File retained or had a cap year, a level year in the bill and we're suggesting that we want to retain that. With that, we have included a waiver process whereby any school can apply for a waiver of rules and regulations with the State Board of Education and we're asking that those waiver requests be handled promptly by the board. Those waivers would be available for rules or regs that are waivable under state regulations. They would not apply to any federal laws or federal rules and regulations, of course, because we wouldn't be able to waive those. Given that brief description, I'm going to...how much of my time have I used, Madam President?

PRESIDENT ROBAK: You have seven minutes left.

SENATOR BROMM: Okay, I'm going to use a couple more minutes and let Senator Bohlke share the opening. Very briefly, the thrust of this amendment is meant to instill once again in everyone the seriousness of the situation that we're in with our special education funding. I think you will remember some of the information that was passed out on General File, and earlier on perhaps on Select File, special education is multiplying in a geometric fashion at a double digit rate. It is going to eventually consume even more of the state funds than what it does now. It has doubled in the last six years, special education funding. At the rate of growth that we have now, without any action, it's projected to be 200 million by the year 2000. For over ten years, we've been looking at the problem. Then Governor Kerrey tried to address it in 1986 and found that it was complicated, difficult, very sensitive politically and there have been studies, there have been commissions but it really hasn't been addressed. I want to impose the serious step that we're taking here because I think that is really the only way to bring people to the table and to take a serious look at all aspects, all aspects of the delivery of special education and do the most effective job that we can, give those kids the education that they so deserve, that qualify for special education, but we've got to have some...some restraint on who we identify and use the monies that we have as prudently and as effectively as possible. And I think this is a real opportunity for us to seize the chance to turn the direction on this program before it becomes such a heavy burden around our necks that people raise a hew and cry that we need to cut the program or do away with it and that kind of thing. I will yield the rest of