

area, the tremendous growth in the numbers that have been identified in the lower grades, and actually thousands of speech and language have been identified between the ages of 5 and 11, and then after they reach age 11, the number drops dramatically. These numbers suggest, I think, that quite often the condition is not a handicap, to begin with, in some of those cases. It may be a development problem, and it may be a development problem that can be handled in regular education. There is a lot of room for flexibility if we allow it. The federal government, as they process...

PRESIDENT ROBAK: One minute.

SENATOR BROMM: ...their grant programs in the future, is also going to be looking at, at least they say they are, at waivers and looking at regulations that will be...that will be made more...more broad or more flexible so that people don't have to fit every child into a certain slot, allow for some combined treatment by paraprofessionals and those that aren't quite so highly paid. We have timewise I think...I know it is going to put pressure on schools, but with some of those that we have checked with, many of them are on contracts with ESUs, on a per day or per hour basis, and those contracts, if they don't need as much service, they are not locked into paying a fixed amount. They will pay as they go, so to speak. So I think that if they need less of the service in the ESU,...

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Time.

SENATOR BROMM: ...they will save some money this coming school year. Thank you.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Bromm. Senator Wehrbein.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Madam Speaker and members of the body, I am going to support this, and I have gone through some soul-searching on doing this. I realize it is not an easy thing to do. In fact, I know some superintendents that are going to be uncomfortable with what I am doing, but I am taking...I am wearing the hat of the Appropriations Chairman at this point. As I look at it, we've done some things in Medicaid, and will continue to do so. We have done some things in welfare and continue to do so. We have more to do. And it is time to work on this one too. It is an issue that has been well described here. I am going to ask Senator Bohlke a question in a minute