

especially that we're not getting our money's worth. I read the dollar amount on the lottery funds. I think Lincoln has done quite well. Millard has really done well. They got a million dollars and several of the Omaha schools have done well, but that doesn't mean the children in Senator Chambers' district shouldn't be hooked up to Internet and use that and the poorest areas in Lincoln and it was mentioned that, mentioned about the Education Committee. I have since the beginning of this bill, I have worked very closely with Senator Bohlke and she would have been to our hearing but she had another...she had a hearing in education, she couldn't make it. So that takes care of that point. So I rise to oppose the proposed amendment.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Robinson. Senator Withem.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Yes, members of the body, I would rise in opposition to the Robak amendment. A lot of what I wanted to say has been said and I probably should just sit down and be quiet but I think that the message from Senator Warner and Senator Bernard-Stevens was such a strong one and such an important one that it needs to be mentioned again. Most of you know of my involvement in the area of school finance and most of you know about LB 1059. LB 1059 was a commitment on the part of this Legislature to move toward equitable school finance, a system whereby we spread out the differences between school districts. This...and the problem that we had was that too many school districts in this state did not have the local wealth in order to fund good education programs. Those school districts that did have the wealth had very low taxes and could provide lots of money. That is the policy commitment of this Legislature. It is still in statute. This amendment really runs counter to that and I think Senator Bernard-Stevens and Senator Warner pointed that out. We as a State Legislature have a responsibility to provide educational experiences for all of the children in this state and even though I am one of those senators representing school districts on Senator Witek's...Senator Wesely's, Senator Wesely's list? Senator Wesely, are you here?

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Wesely.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Pardon me?

PRESIDENT ROBAK: He does not appear to be here.