

SPEAKER WITHEM: And they are not, I guess, is the point I wanted to make. That is not a factually true statement about equalization. The very, very rich school districts, rich in terms of, and I know we get a lot of debate from people like Senator Jones, if he were on the floor, and probably Senator Schrock and others as it relates to what constitutes wealth and what doesn't. But if we use property as an indicator of wealth, the very richest school districts do not receive equalization. From there, with the formula in LB 1059 we simply add up a school districts needs, we subtract its resources and then they get state aid. Those few in terms of students, size of districts, number of students serve school districts that do not receive equalization are among the richest in the state. Lincoln School Districts is by no means a poor school district. I'd ask for and I guess I don't have that information, but it's valuation per pupil is, I believe, above the statewide average, but it is an equalization school district. You are factually incorrect by saying that the definition of a poor school district is one that receives equalization. The old formula, the old formula, when only about 20 percent of all state aid was distributed by equalization, by definition if you received equalization you were a poor school district. I do not agree with that definition, one point I wanted to make. Second point I wanted to make is this whole red herring that's being drawn across the trail here of the Legislature, when it's trying to get its work done, of this concept of somehow by taking money that was in the Weatherization Fund and being distributed on a categorical basis, the school districts, not relative to their relative wealth, and transferring that into another fund does exactly the same thing, is somehow counter equalization. We have about \$415 million of general state aid money. I will argue and debate and be a part of the fight all the way along the line that the majority of that does need to be distributed via equalization formula, and we need to do that. What Senator Robinson's bill is doing, however, is taking a school weatherization program, which was a categorical program given to school districts not based on their relative need, and is saying we're going to continue giving that money out in a categorical program, only we're going to use it for a different purpose. We're not going to use it to...not going to use it to weatherize schools anymore. We are going to use it for telecommunications, which interestingly enough was the premise of a bill that Senator Beutler introduced this year, that we were going to allow the Department of Energy...