

January 25, 1996 LE 700A

fund to eliminate it?

SENATOR BOHLKE: Senator Maurstad, there have been bills introduced to increase the amount of money into the HELP fund and then to take that amount back down. So we've had that debate a number of times and we've talked about the issue then about the money never being there. That was the last that I remember the debate on the issue.

SENATOR MAURSTAD: But to the best of your knowledge, there's never been a bill introduced to eliminate the HELP fund, to completely take it away.

SENATOR BOHLKE: Well, I'm not sure... I haven't always been here since it was introduced, so I guess to the best of my memory I could say I do not remember a bill to eliminate it.

SENATOR MAURSTAD: Well, I'm going to make a guess, and maybe someone will be able to come up with a bill that was introduced to eliminate the HELP fund. And if that's the case, then this argument will hold not quite as much water. But if there were those that were concerned about the dollars being used for this program, they could have introduced a bill to eliminate the funding for it. I doubt that that's been done. Now we have some dollars that are being used that most people agree aren't being used appropriately. And so there was an alternative proposed that the dollars that the state taxpayers are providing could be better used in the manner that we have before us. And I guess I have to agree that I had some difficulty with the way the HELP funds ended up being administered, and so since there hasn't been the alternative to completely eliminate these funds, it would seem to me that a proper use of these funds would be to use them in the retirement plan as what's being proposed. So I stand in support of LB 700A. Thank you, Madam President.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Senator Maurstad. Senator Withem.

SPEAKER WITHEM: I would call the question.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you. The question has been called. Do I see five hands? I do. The question is, shall debate cease? All in favor vote aye, opposed... We're voting on whether to cease debate. Have you all voted? Senator Withem.