

February 13, 1996 LB 1050

that. We've always had a difficult time of having...of deciding how the money was going to flow. And eventually we moved it into the equalization formula, and that's how it gets tied up in school finance. Option was never, in the beginning, a part of that, it was moved in because we couldn't always fund it at the proper level and it was decided to put it in equalization. The amendment that Senator Bohlke is offering, and Senator Brown and others are supporting, continues the process and the concept of the choice legislation in the first place, and it does not differentiate between an equalization or nonequalization school district, because that was not the idea of choice. The choice was if parents chose to move to a different school district because of a better type of education that they feel their children would get, they would do so and there would be dollars following that student. The concept that was in the bill, that there would be a netting out, makes absolute sense. If a school district receives 10 students optioning in, but 15 students option out, that there would be a netting out of how many option students actually, and if you're in the positive you'd receive (interrupted)...

SPEAKER WITHEM: One minute.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: ...in the negative you don't. That portion, I think, makes absolute sense if we're talking about having an impact on school districts in regards to the funding aspect. The fact that we're taking it out of the 20 percent tax income...income tax rebate also makes sense to me. I've never been comfortable with taking it out of the equalization because that tended to be contrary to what we were trying to do with the equalization policy. So I commend Senator Bohlke on the amendment, I think it makes good sense as far as the option concept of what we, as a state, are trying to do. It provides a stable source and the money goes to any school district that would have an increase, net increase of option students, and they would get the dollars rather than expecting dollars, and there would be a very big shortfall because there weren't enough dollars to afford to fund itself, this would handle that very (interrupted).

SPEAKER WITHEM: Time.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: And I support...with that, urge you to support the amendment.