

February 14, 1996 LB 349, 1050

the eyes of the formula, looked like they had more resources have grown faster, have become...having more resources continually at a percentage than those districts who are looking needier. And so it has acted really as not going counter to equalization. And so looking at that, and as you remember in the beginning I said if we keep our eyes focused on, if you believe equity in the formula, that that's the important philosophy we need to remember. As we have.... What has happened in the past is that has been allowed to grow and grow rapidly for those districts who, in the formula, already looked like they didn't need as much help, were not needy, that seemed to be counter to what we were trying to accomplish in 1059. And so the recommendation of the Education Committee is to say, yes, we will honor that commitment that we think was made to the voters and here on the floor of the Legislature, but we will go back and freeze at the amount that was there when we passed 1059. And I think that gives you the background and the perspective and what the proposal is before you now, and I will try to answer any questions. Thank you.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator. Senator Bernard-Stevens.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you very much, Madam President, members of the body. Just a little bit of historical background, if you wish, on the income tax rebate. We had a discussion in the Legislature. I was reading through the transcripts of the original debate of 1059, last night, and it was...it's fascinating reading. One of the probably best discussed and debated issues I've seen on the floor of the Legislature, or at least that I remember on the floor of the Legislature in a long, long time. All sides had their amendments, all sides had a thorough discussion, no one was cutting anybody off on the question, and it was very, very unique, I think, in the history of the Legislature. But we had a debate on income. And there was no disagreement that income should be a factor, the question was, how, how should it be a factor? And there were a lot of people at the time that talked about something similar to LB 349, what Senator Robak had yesterday, that fits so well into the debate today. And I thought, by the way Senator Robak, you did a tremendous job on talking about the concept of an income tax rebate. But there got to be questions, what type of income do you use? Is it gross? Is it net? Is it adjusted? And the overall question got to be, even if you use income as a source for a weighted

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