

February 20, 1996 LB 1050

have the ability to pay. You've got to keep that concept in mind. When you raise the levy, everyone has to pay, whether you have the ability or not. So the ability to pay is never going to be totally a factor because it has to be accessed by the school district. Second of all, think a minute what we are going to do possibly as a Legislature. If you would then still argue on the floor that income needs to be a factor, the only way the school district can access those dollars is to increase the mill levy, which we very well may cap this session. We may cap the overall levy, reducing school districts, I don't know, from a dollar to maybe a dollar, twenty total cap on their levy. So what you'd be doing is saying, yes, we are going to put an income as a factor, we are going to decrease your state aid, because you have a higher ability to pay, and, oh, yes, by the way, we are not going to allow the school districts to be able to access that because we are going to lower the cap so they have to reduce spending. Come on! It can't be done that way. It's totally coming from opposite directions and you are really causing harm by doing so. Now if you are not going to do anything on property tax, when the Revenue Committee comes out, and you're not going to cap levies, and you are going to give them the ability to access that by raising the levy, fine, put it...

SENATOR CROSBY: One minute.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: ...as a factor. The final comment I want to make in the last minute is I get a little frustrated from my side. Last week, I'm convinced and I think most of the members are convinced there are 25 plus, I am going to guess around 33 votes, for the bill. We didn't have to compromise. We didn't have to do anything on the hold-harmless. We could have kept it at 1,300. We didn't have to compromise and take it from 83 million of base bringing it up to \$102 million, we didn't have to. But it gets real frustrating on this side is when we do open out our...our hands and say, we will work with you, we'll compromise, and then have people stand up and saying, well, that's real fine, but I'm not going to support the bill anyway. Sometimes you have to say and you have to come the other half with those that are extending the hand. If you make compromises and you agree with the compromises, maybe some in their hearts just can't, but the majority should say at least I am going to support the bill, because if no one supports the bill, we haven't...