

February 21, 1996 LB 1205

briefly, I rise in opposition to the Withem amendment for the following reasons. And maybe something can be stated later that will show the logic to be ill-conceived. But the way the committee amendments are now, if you just take a minute and look at the committee amendments, the plan will have to be developed and sent to the Education Committee and, in essence, the Legislature on December 1 of this year, '96. If you look at the last line of the committee amendment, the committee amendment then says that the plan will not be implemented, I believe, until July 1, 1997. And what that implies is, when the plan comes back there is that month of December to look at it, to evaluate, there's the legislative session starting in January, anyone wishing to make a change will have that session to deal with the real issues of what the plan is. So we will have, in essence, a report given to the Legislature. We will have, in essence, the Legislature dealing with the issue if we do not support the plan or if others don't support the plan it can be changed by the legislative session prior to the plan's implementation of July of '97. So with that logic I concur with what Senator Withem is trying to do to say that the Legislature should have a say in what the plan is. On the other hand I think the bill as we amended it in committee provides that process and provides that time period where the Legislature may deal with the issue if, in fact, they don't like the plan that's there. So I think we've built into the process time for the Legislature to work. I think we've built in process so those that will be concerned with the plan will be able to work that session. And that's the, I think that's about as good as you can ask. So at this point I guess I have to side with Senator Bromm and will be voting no at this point on the Withem amendment unless, again, something is stated that makes me rethink that position.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Senator Bernard-Stevens. Senator Withem.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Yes, members of the body, several things I want to say in response to what I've heard so far. First of all, when Senator Bromm got up to speak right after I did, I sensed he was taking some offense, probably rightfully so, if he thought that I was impugning his motives for bringing this bill. I certainly was not doing that. What I was trying to indicate to the body is that over the course of my time in the Legislature in dealing with this issue there have been