

February 21, 1996 LB 1205

year 1996 and wonder why the Nebraska Legislature decided to sell off what remained of our educational lands when we had the chance to hold on to it and know that land is always valuable and always going to be there for us, whereas Senator Chambers was talking about the stock market and the up and down and the bankruptcies that result. The land will always be there, and that's one of the things that we have to keep in mind. It's stable and it's a secure economic entity and value that will go on to the future. So I argue that the decision in the past, I think, may have been a mistake to sell land. The decision now may be a mistake. And before we make that mistake or take that step, we ought to know everything about it. And that's why I think the Withem amendment, saying this issue should come back to the Legislature, is the right decision to make. It says, yes, go forward, look at our options, develop a plan, let's see what we ought to do, and then bring that back to this Legislature and decide from that point. Otherwise, again, you leave it in the hands of bureaucracy. Now this is not an unprecedented step to take. We did it with the welfare issue. We asked for a plan, we came back and we revised and refined that plan and we took action at that point. We've done it with Medicaid. We've done it with other issues that I've been involved in. We're going to do it with the health and human services reorganization of the different agencies. There we say generally where we want to go, come back with a plan, and then the Legislature will have to reapprove that plan. On major policy issues that have long-term impacts it is my view that this Legislature ought to have a second look when more detail is available. So I rise in support of the amendment, I think that it is in fact the wise policy course to take. Although I'm very, very skeptical about any sort of change in educational lands, I also recognize there have been some problems, perhaps some administrative questions have come up. And I've been reassured that the administrative costs have been very much held in line, that since 1978 (inaudible)...

SENATOR WILL PRESIDING

SENATOR WILL: One minute.

SENATOR WESELY: ...the year I got elected to the Legislature, increases have averaged 3 percent a year in administrative costs. If there are problems out there in the handling of these lands, that ought to be looked at, we ought to look at