

be educated. And I think that it, it really even shouldn't have to be mandated that that...I mean that should be understood that that is part of each school district's responsibility. Well, because of a lot of different reasons, including the fact that the special...the whole special education question is being studied and it is up in the air, the Education Committee decided instead to send a letter to the Department of Education and asking for an inclusion in this year's appropriation bill of enough money to allow the Department of Education to develop the curriculum and the program and to encourage the teaching of braille. What this amendment does is it provides \$37,450 for this program to be incorporated into the Department of Education. It would provide \$23,350 for a computer, a braille printer, and a program, a braille translation program. I mean the technology is wonderful now. You can translate almost anything. And this computer, as I understand it, would be dedicated to doing just that, to provide materials for schools that request it. There's also included 14,000 on an ongoing basis every year for training for teachers. So the cost of the program, on a yearly basis, once you bought the computer and so forth, is really a minuscule amount. I feel that it's the least I can do as to bring this to you because these folks have worked very hard on this issue. They sincerely believe that if students with sight problems are going to learn to read, they need access to braille education. So with that I think that explains the issue. I'd be happy to answer questions if you have them.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Thank you, Senator Vrtiska followed by Senator Hillman.

SENATOR VRTISKA: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body. I'd just like to ask Senator Schimek one question, if I might.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Schimek, can you respond?

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Yes.

SENATOR VRTISKA: These funds that you're talking about, in order to provide these computers and machines that teach, that money is all provided by the state?

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Senator, this would be a one-time expenditure for the Department of Education to buy that computer to do the