

Said that, disagreeing with what Senator Wickersham said that option hold harmless...that the option program is a state program, and indicating it's just another way in which school children enter the doors of schools and it ought to be handled at the local level like any other program. A lot of you will disagree with that philosophical position, but that was the position that we took. Seventeen of us introduced that bill. It went to the Education Committee. The Education Committee said that they had a better idea, one that was less onerous, so we started out all the way over here with repeal and the Education Committee, under the very able and talented leadership of Senator Bohlke, indicated that they felt that a net out program was better. But they were going to net out not at the full per pupil cost, but they were going to net out at the equalization level, saying that's the amount of state money that ought to be flowing in, is the equalization money. So those of us that had this original position moved over a step and said, fine, Senator Bohlke, for a couple of reasons, one because of your very able, talented leadership, more importantly because we didn't have the votes probably, agree to move over a step and say, fine, we'll support that position. On General File...on General File we moved to yet another position because we heard from individuals from my neighborhood, Omaha District 66, others throughout the state that going to the equalization level was not...was not appropriate. So we made another compromise and we went to the statewide average cost, I believe is what it was--a significant change in the bill. And when we did so as a way of placating some of the opposition, a way of listening to arguments and moving forward but yet we took yet another step. Part of the...my understanding, and I understood it at the time, part of my understanding...part of that deal was that we're going to make sure that that money comes out of the rebate. I remember Senator Brown on the floor making strong arguments as to why she never understood why this came out of equalization to begin with, that that's where it ought to come out of. I think it was...I'm not criticizing anybody if there was a lack of understanding because I know there's stuff that goes on when I'm off the floor that I come back and didn't necessarily understand, but it was clear in the record that that's what we were doing. We made yet another adjustment, so we're now over here from original outright repeal, which 17 of us supported, to a position where we are going to net out, we are going to net out at the average statewide cost but we're going to take that money out of rebate. I think we arrived at a suitable