

compromise on that issue and I don't think we need to take that additional step back further. I'd also point out that we've gone through the same similar sort of steps on the rebate issue, from outright repeal to freezing it at its initial level, to now we're freezing it at 102 million dollars as opposed to 83 million dollars. A lot of steps have been made...

PRESIDENT ROBAK: One minute.

SPEAKER WITHEM: ..toward compromising toward the middle ground. I understand why individuals that aren't comfortable with the policy want to continue to do this, but those of you that are...that are, you know, listening to arguments on fairness and looking at what sorts of compromises have already taken place, I think we've already made enough on this issue and I would oppose the Wickersham amendment.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Withem. Senator Maurstad. Senator Maurstad. Senator Janssen.

SENATOR JANSSEN: Madam Lieutenant Governor, members of the body, I stand to oppose the Wickersham amendment also because I thought we had come to an agreement or raising the equalization or the amount of income tax money which would be held out at 102 million dollars. That was up considerably from that. Now I understand this will come from that and I'm not sure whether that is as low a percentage, Senator Wickersham. I don't doubt his figures, but any time you mess with any portion of this equaliza...I'm a firm believer in equalization. I think that's what it's all about. You've got school districts out that are low spenders in their tier, low spenders in their tier and they still seem to come up on the short end of the stick. I...and maybe this will help those districts. I have...most of the district...school districts within the 15th Legislative District are comparatively low, low spenders in their tier and hopefully this can help those people who are achieving the low spending process by trying to cut back, trying to cut corners. So I think we are just kind of defeating our purpose here and if someone can explain that to me in a different way I'm certainly willing to listen. I'd like to give the rest of my time to Senator Bernard-Stevens, if he would accept it.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Bernard-Stevens, there's three and a half minutes remaining.