

Opportunities Fund, the 1059 fund. The objective is this, and this is structured in the bill so that if this does not occur by the time that the school levy goes into effect then the school levy cap will sunset. If, on the other hand, we have raised this amount of money and put it into the State Aid Fund, then the caps will continue to be in effect. It's not my objective to suggest that all of the money that the schools would need for replacement should be replaced now with some sort of new revenue; \$150 million is not all of the money, by any means, that will be required, at the most optimistic it's three-quarters, at the least optimistic it's perhaps 60 percent. In any event there is going to be a substantial figure that's going to have to be made up with either some kind of restructuring or continued reduction in school expenditures, on the level of 10 to 15 percent at every school district, even with this kind of "influxion" of funds. The intent of the amendment and all I'm trying to get us to commit to, and I think if we're willing...if we're really willing to do this, we ought to be able to commit to it, that is a commitment to raise part of that money for sure if this cap is going into effect. I'm not sure I can vote for this bill if I have to be a riverboat gambler and so we are now capping the school levies in such a way that it will cause a 25 to 30 percent reduction in their revenues, and I'm willing to bet on the fact that we can either beat the chamber of commerce or beat somebody else in this political game in order to restore some of that funding to the children. When we talk about cities, I don't think in terms of individuals so much, and when we talk about counties, I don't think in terms of individuals so much, not individual faces and persons. They're big people, they can fight, they can struggle, they can move to protect themselves. But when I think about schools I think about the kids. And it's one mistake to do damage to certain kinds of institutions, they can recover better. But to do any sort of long-term damage to the children is the biggest mistake we could possibly make. And I know that we're all playing here this game and we're thinking, well, maybe there will be a petition drive and maybe there won't be, and we don't want a petition drive, and we certainly don't because those propositions would be much worse for the children of the state, in my opinion, than anything we're doing today. Nonetheless, I have to believe that the people of the state will understand a logical and reasoned and effective and serious act on our part that is designed to make this transition in an intelligent way. And petition drives notwithstanding, I don't