

that. My response back to those individuals, I don't know if I am making any sense at all, but I am going to keep at it here anyway, my response back to those individuals has been that's not the fault of the common levy, it's probably the fault that the state aid formula does not recognize legitimate extra costs for people that live in states that are...parts of our state that are sparsely populated. It's tougher to have a school district in an area where you have few people per square mile than it is in parts of the state where there are lots of people per square mile. So we need to recognize that. That's the conclusion I came to. We need to recognize the problems caused by a past action. We don't need to recognize those by repealing that action because, in my opinion, it was a good action. We need to recognize those problems by moving forward. Hence the amendment. The amendment indicates that, first of all, we recognize that we do not recognize unique costs associated with funding a quality education program for students living in sparsely populated areas of this state, number one, and that's the key part of this amendment. I know some people said, is that needed? And I know some folks, and I always get into these, I end up doing what I think is the right thing and end up fighting with people that I'm typically on the same side with, and that's okay. I am willing to do that. We recognize that point. Secondly, we direct the School Finance Committee to conduct a study. Third, we tell them to come back with their recommendations, not on whether we ought to do this, but how we ought to do this by December 15, 1996. I think this is the right thing to do. I don't think we're talking about, and I'm not throwing in the towel indicating that any old sparsity factor makes sense. I want it to be one that seriously takes into consideration those unique costs of individuals in the sparse...running schools in this...truly sparsely populated areas of our state. I don't think it will have to shift a large sum of money around, but we ought to probably be making some recognition for that. With that, I would urge you to adopt this amendment, and I would yield the remainder of the time to Senator Jones, because I know Senator Jones' District is probably more impacted by these...these types of school districts than any other one in the state. I appreciate his interest in this and his willingness to sign on to this amendment, and let me give the rest of my time to Senator Jones.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Jones, there is 4.5 minutes remaining.