

be made and it does not hurt, in my opinion, to reinforce the desire of the Legislature to leave intact the core services and responsibilities of the political subdivisions.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator. Senator Bromm.

SENATOR EROMM: Thank you, Madam President and colleagues. I had my light on before Senator Hartnett spoke, and I think probably what he said I would have to agree with and echo. I understand the intent of the amendment, and it's good intent, that if we are going to have some constraints on budget, we want to definitely keep our academic programs in place to the extent that we possibly can, but I don't want to be in a position of dictating to the local boards, if there is a dangerous situation in a school building, if there is a roof that might fall in if we have a snowstorm, or some other hazardous situation, that we somehow or other tell them that they should not take precautionary measures with their budget to prevent that, if it is going to somehow impeded an academic program because I mean these are the kinds of things that that's why we have school boards. And I don't always agree with the priorities that every school board sets, but, by the same token, I don't want to sit here in the State Legislature and prescribe what those priorities should be down to the...down to the gnat's eye. So although the intent, the intent of Senator Brown and the language in the amendment I couldn't agree with more in terms of academics come first, I have to resist the temptation to micromanage what these boards' decisions are and we need to leave them flexibility. They are accountable to the parents and the students and the voters, and if their priorities are misplaced, eventually I think they will be replaced. So I...I have every confidence in our local boards to set priorities and I see more informed board decisions I think as time goes along. I think more and more you have people realizing how very important it is that students come out of high school with the ability to either embark upon the next level of education, whether that be a college prep or whether it be a technical school, or entering the work force. I think there is more and more realization that that's the direction we need to head. And so I guess I think it's...it would be interpreted, even though the intent is very well, I think it would be interpreted as a little bit of a slap in the face by local school boards. And so I would resist the amendment for those reasons. Thank you, Madam President.