

would like us to focus our attention. That's what this amendment does. It says, the school districts are too small in some cases, they are inefficient as a result, and we need to find ways to reduce those costs. One of the things I, again, I know we've talked on Class I before, but the fact that the average number of students in our Class I school districts is 33, so now you're talking about, in K through eights, in nine grades essentially, three or four students for each of those grades. And I understand why in the sparsely populated parts of the state that there's a need for some of that. But there is also a situation, I think, more prevalent than not, where these are school districts that could join forces, where they could get a size that would be more efficient and I think not only reduce the administrative cost but improve the quality of education. And that's a balance that we need to address. Now, what I think you're suggesting through the bill and its budget restraints and mill levy caps is to say this is what we want to see happen.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: One minute.

SENATOR WESELY: But you want to wash your hands of the actual steps that will be taken of it. And I'm suggesting, I'm trying to force the issue that the next step that comes with the passage of these bills will have to be reorganization efforts like this. And that's even less than probably will be suggested when other proposals come forward on the ballot. So I think that this is exactly what we don't want to face, but it's exactly what we have to face as we talk about the need to reduce property taxes.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Madam Lieutenant Governor, members of the Legislature, I guess I'm really building upon what Senator Wesely had to say. It seems to me that there is not a connect here in what we talk about in different aspects of this package. On the one hand we seem to be saying, we're going to cut school budgets by around 30 percent starting two years from now. And we don't want any amendment that has to do with replacement revenues because we want to get efficiency, enormous efficiencies here also. Well, efficiencies only come in a couple of different ways, and I suggest to you that you're not going to get anywhere close to 30 percent, lucky if you can get