

unless you have hard facts. And the feelings are so strong that sometimes you don't even get the hard facts because you never get even that far. Time and again with NRDs, for example, they don't come publicly and say these things. They don't write it in the newspaper, but they say, by golly, I'm glad the state makes us explore this or that because we really should, you know, but I can't really say that. But by providing a little bit of push, not a command, there's nothing in here that commands consolidation, but providing a little bit of a push in the context of this dramatic change seems to me a very reasonable thing to do and something that would probably actually be helpful. The bottom line, it's curious to me in the end that a tax package that provides absolutely no solutions, absolutely no solutions for school financing, absolutely none, a tax package that provides no solutions won't even give a gentle little nudge towards one part of the solution which is school efficiency and school consolidation. I guess we'll have a lot of work to do and some interesting discussions these next two years, but I think that part of that might be spread out and perhaps what we're doing could be more intelligent in the next couple years and less explosive...

SENATOR WILL: One minute.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ..if some of this work were done in the meantime by the school districts and we had some things to look at, some actual fact situations to talk about, some actual evidence of what's going out...what's going on out there in the countryside. Wouldn't it be nice to be able to discuss in the next couple years what's happened all around the state; that all of the school districts have done these cost estimates on consolidating with other school districts and we know specifically why or why not they do or do not consolidate? Right now, we're all guessing. It's always the same process. We think they should consolidate, but none of us have specific information on the facts. In light of the work that we need to do in the next couple years, I would suggest to you that having some information, having the school districts having explored something, having them to have something to tell us that's factual in nature, not surmise, not fear, not hope, but factual...

SENATOR WILL: Time.