

SENATOR BEUTLER: No, I agree

SENATOR VRTISKA: It has to cost some money.

SENATOR BEUTLER: I agree, Senator.

SENATOR VRTISKA: Okay. That's all I want to know. Thank you.

SENATOR WILL: Thank you, Senator Vrtiska. Senator Beutler, you're recognized to close.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Will, members of the Legislature, it's interesting that such a mild proposition can draw such a strong response and I think it's indicative of the problems that we have. Here we are about to reform our school system, dramatically dropping their ability to levy property taxes by 20 to 30 percent, depending on where you are, and saying that we want to get efficiencies, we're going to force efficiencies, and then when you look to where the efficiencies can come from the one thing that shrieks out at you most you want to kind of shut your eyes and say, they'll take care of it, they'll take care of it in the short period of the next couple years, when history has shown us that even with all of the incentives that we've put in place and everything that we've done they've taken care of it only very slowly and usually as often as not in reaction to one or more additional state laws that have been passed to encourage it. It is an erroneous history of the matter to suggest that this has happened largely without mandates and to suggest that it would happen in the future without mandates also means that we're blinking our eyes because what many of us are really thinking and what some are telling me is that the big mandate, the big whale mandate, of cutting off access to the property taxes will force consolidation. Isn't it interesting that this little procedural amendment gets all this opposition and everybody hates forced consolidation, but in the back room everybody will tell you, well, this is one that will really force consolidation. You know, if that's true, if that's really what were all thinking and we're not willing to say it, shouldn't we at least prepare for that reality? Shouldn't we at least be encouraging the school districts to look intelligently at what we in fact are going to force them to do by putting on this levy cap? The logic of all this still eludes me and all this amendment does is attempt to fit into this process to encourage and accelerate one of the aspects of the solution,