

before the body, we have our votes, we have a majority of us deciding on trying to do what we feel is in the best interest of this state. And we may have disagreements on this, but at least we're both trying in our own best faith effort to try to do the best thing. And these petitions tell us that they have no confidence in what our ability is when it comes to property tax relief. And the severe reduction in the amount of some of these petitions, the severe restrictions that they place on government, I really wonder, they apparently have no confidence in school districts, no confidence in any local subdivisions when they take away the property taxes. And then they expect the Legislature to come back and pick up the bill in the end. I mean that's what they're all asking us to do. They're all asking us to raise our income and our sales tax to pick up the tab on property taxes, which we may or may not do here down the road. But certainly we will have no options when these petitions go on. And there will be some major, major changes that will occur if one of...if one of these petitions does go into effect. I feel it'd be unfortunate that after all the hard work we put in, years and years of hard work on dealing with property taxes, that this is the approach we would take. And that's why this amendment is being offered. It's being offered as an attempt to try to lessen the harsh, harsh loss of state...or harsh loss of state funds which will result in a property tax increase for the majority of the districts in this state. Now, let's talk a little bit about the numbers. I appreciate all the hard work the Department of Education has done in providing these numbers for us. And I know they've gone to a lot of hard work. In years past they've...

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: One minute.

SENATOR ABOUD: ...been much, much slower in providing these numbers. A lot of times we didn't get them until after the session was over, which, which was hard when you're voting on a bill to know how this is going to impact your district. But they did an outstanding job in providing these numbers. Now the Department of Education will also be involved in providing the numbers to the school districts, and they'll certify the state aid, they'll give it to the school district so that school district will know when they put in their budget they'll know how much money they're getting, the same agency that's going to be involved with it. So I guess I do have a lot of confidence in them and I do feel that these are accurate numbers. And it's