

bill to us as a mechanism for additional funds to be placed into our state aid equalization formula. I know that there's the opportunity to do so but I'm not going to support the Bernard-Stevens amendment and that's not because I don't like the equalization fund, that's not because our students who need reading and writing are less important than a field or some other facility, but, by and large, all those monies do come from the taxpayers. They're all needs and they're priorities and this one happens to be generated by the university. We thought it was appropriate to keep that generated and have some nexus from where the money came from to keep it into the higher education system, not send that money into the General Fund or not to put it into equalization. If we're going to put it into the General Fund, then I think you're probably right. You might be better off putting it into the equalization formula so it doesn't get spent on something else so at least there would be some relationship to education. So I think Senator Bernard-Stevens' purpose is noble, certainly a good cause. I just don't think at this point in time that goes with the spirit that the bill was introduced with. That certainly doesn't comply with the spirit that the Transportation Committee advanced the bill with. And I'm only guessing, I don't see too many of the members, but had that been an amendment, I doubt...

SPEAKER WITHEM: One minute.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: ...that it would have been successful in the committee. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Brashear.

SENATOR BRASHEAR: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, I, very briefly, I rise reluctantly to oppose the Bernard-Stevens amendment, not because his purposes are not laudable, but simply because this is the furthest that this bill has ever come I believe and we all know what that process is about. And it's been an attempt to accommodate various points of view and it has brought us thus far and it's important that the process at some point coalesce and the integrity be maintained and, in my judgment, that this bill be advanced for both its fun reasons, 30,000-plus people who simply want to do this, this good thing and enjoy this unity, and for its practical reasons that our people are asking to spend \$2.1 million and we can achieve good with it. And I ask respectfully for the defeat of the