

idea and I rise in support of it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Hillman.

SENATOR HILLMAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, members of the body. I, too, rise in support of the suspension of the rules and the amendment, and want to thank Senator Warner for recognizing the fact that I think local governments do need some assistance and some tools to do the kinds of things we are asking them to do and look at the state offering some assistance in that area. I think if you look at the kinds of entities and local officials we are talking about perhaps getting around a table and doing some long-range planning, and deciding how they could better work together to accomplish some of the things they need to to provide the services needed on a local level, it's going to be a different and a strange role for them. They are going to have to be getting outside of their own turfs and broadening, I think, their concepts in what it is they would like to do. In many instances, there will be "the big kid on the block" that perhaps could be intimidating to some of the smaller groups and to be able to have a facilitator, be able to have someone come in, if that's needed, to manage that system so that everybody has some input. The other thing that's going to be extremely important in this process is to get community input, to be able to organize those public meetings, because many of the things that's going to want to be done is going to have to be with the assistance or the vote of local citizens in that particular county or school district, and unless you have avenues and the expertise and the talents to know how to bring them in to get the kinds of input that you need, it is going to be very difficult. The other thing that I think is very important in this amendment is there is an evaluation component. I would hope that those communities, in some cases they are a lot further down the road than others, and that they will be able to offer, as a result of some of their experiences, I think in going to this committee, will be able to offer suggestions and at least give other communities that are coming further on down the road, that won't start this process for awhile, perhaps some ideas what works and what doesn't work. And with that, I would, again, thank Senator Warner for considering this amendment and would strongly support the suspension of the rules and then the amendment.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Crosby.