

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

February 3, 1999 LB 149

schools, but it is to small schools. This is either they're going to have to vote to override, vote to merge, or else close. It's a very serious situation. But I don't see how this body can come in now and say, oh, sorry, we're not going to do what we told you we were going to do. Through no fault of their own, they're being cut back on their state aid. This body in past years has stated we're going down this path and you're going to get state aid and it's going to be this much. Now we're coming...we came back and said, oh, sorry, you're not going to get that much. We can't do that to our schools. So I think this body needs to get real serious about what we're doing with education in this state, get on a course, stay on that course, and fund education like we should be funding education. There's nothing more important in this state than education. We need to fund it properly and I think 149 helps do that. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator. The Chair recognizes Senator Coordsen.

SENATOR COORDSEN: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body. I am probably one of the least qualified members of this Legislature to get up and speak to the issues contained within 149. I was not a supporter of 806. Even today, I think it was not sufficiently thought through, although there were parts of it that worked. I have yet to be able to see in 149 a tax policy issue, and I'm telling you that as a long-time member of the Revenue Committee, and that's what we do, is tax policy. (LB) 806 was, on the face of it, a restructuring of how state aid was distributed and how much was distributed to compensate, as other speakers have talked about, for the effects of a property tax reduction package that fundamentally concluded...it was a several-year, several-bill-long approach, but it concluded with the establishment of the levies contained in 1114, as you've already heard. The funding enabled the state of Nebraska to continue to provide to the children across the state an opportunity for a quality education by someone's definition, which was somewhat dependent upon where you live, but that's for another day. (LB) 149, in its simplest form and the form we have before us today, is fundamentally an adjustment for...to a formula that didn't work in the way it was anticipated to work. The tax policy has already been established. This is an attempt by the Education Committee to effect a better impact than what