

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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I rise to tell you that I'm going to vote against this bill. I may be the only one to do so, but I will vote against it because it's the wrong bill to pass, and voting against it's the right thing to do. Number one, it is our duty to appropriate funds for cause. It is not our duty to appropriate funds, give it to the department and say, here, use this for whatever you want. That is something that I think is beyond the purview of the Department of Education. I think that should be done by us, after we examine what the money is for and the propriety of spending it. That's item number one. Item number two, I think that it's poor management policy to put a fund of money out that people can dip into as they want. The fact that it's a loan has nothing to do with it. This is money that will not be watched by the Legislature. It's poor management policy on the part of the Legislature, it's poor management policy on the part of the school districts and on the Department of Education. The fact that a school district may have excessive costs is a given. The basic fault lies in the structure of the school aid formula, and I've spoken on that subject before and I'm sure I will again in the future. This allows for laxity. We can always go to the fund, so why not do it? They will do it. This is not the way to husband money carefully, and it is our job to husband money carefully. This does not do that. There...I normally don't feel that I should prophesy, but I will prophesy on this. They'll be back for more. This is such a good idea that they will be back for more, and they will have all the reasons to spend that they've had in the past and that they have on this. Lastly, as Senator Bohlke pointed out, and she didn't mean it this way, but this arises from an overappropriation on the small schools mitigation bill. And that bill arose, of course, because of the evils of LB 806. I don't feel that money has an ownership brand on it, but evidently the people who put this bill together do. This is educational money, \$2.773 million of education money. It's ours, they say. It's not. If they have cause to come to the Legislature to appropriate funds then the Appropriations Committee is the proper people to view their needs and recommend the expenditure of that money to this body. Setting up a little war chest that they can dip into, as they need it, even though they say, well you have to pay it back, it still promotes laxity, and they would only do it because the money is there and because we appropriate...overappropriated on small school mitigation bill. That doesn't make it theirs.