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SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Bohlke, do you yield to a question?

SENATOR BOHLKE: Yes.

SENATOR DIERKS: Senator Bohlke, there's been no form of the NAEP test given in Nebraska, nothing like that at all in the past, has there?

SENATOR BOHLKE: I'm sorry, what?

SENATOR DIERKS: There's no form of the NAEP test has been given in Nebraska.

SENATOR BOHLKE: Oh, yes. In fact, until last year, in Nebraska, public schools participated in 1992 and 1994 and 1996; 1998 they did not, public schools. Private schools participated in 1998.

SENATOR DIERKS: So if they were able to do it then, why can't they do it today without legislation?

SENATOR BOHLKE: They...they could, but they chose not to in 1998, which, like I said, the private schools chose to, the public chose not to. Then the result of that was that we can no longer say how Nebraska is doing compared to other states. And the reason we heard from schools was main...mainly was the cost, which now is covered. And, other than that, we didn't have any real reasons why. Oh, plus, local districts do not get the information about their local district. They're really doing it for the good of the state, to see how we, as a state, compare.

SENATOR DIERKS: I see. So, in other words, we have to mandate it now with legislation for it to take place in the state, is that right?

SENATOR BOHLKE: Usually the criticisms I hear is when it's an unfunded mandate, and so this is a funded mandate. It usually comes down to money, but...so the money is there.

SENATOR DIERKS: Okay, well, I guess what I'm getting at is that we've done this in the past but schools have elected not to. So