

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

March 13, 2000 LB 1107

to take a look at someday. I'm not saying we shouldn't look at this. I probably won't vote for it, but I think what you're recommending happening isn't going to happen anyway. But I do want to point that out. Thank you. I yield the rest of my time.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Schrock. Senator Stuhr, on the Beutler amendment.

SENATOR STUHR: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the Legislature. I rise in opposition to the amendment. We've had a lot of discussion and I know in my area, just looking at the list here, that there are a number of schools that are already doing these feasibility studies on their own. And also looking at the amount of money, I quickly got out my state aid formula, as Senator Schrock said, the majority of these schools receive very little state aid; 32,000 one school, 100,000 another school. Yes, it does count up but the entire percentage is very small. I feel that the date that is set here, June 1st, 2005, I'm not a betting person, but I would wager that almost all of those schools will, by that time, be consolidated or unified on their own. It takes time. Our school at Bradshaw recently consolidated with Henderson. This did not happen overnight. It does take time for schools to get together, to work out all of those things. It's working very, very well and I'm very proud of what the schools are doing. But, again, I feel this is a local issue. This is something that schools will take upon themselves. I do agree with Senator Janssen that eventually we may see one district in one county, but I know that we've come a long ways. We're talking about systems now, 200 and some systems in our state compared to literally thousands a few years ago where we had 3,000 districts. Some people can maybe even remember when we had 5,000 districts. So we're down to 200 and some systems which I think is showing a great deal of progress. Yes, these counties are losing population. But let me tell you, why would some people want to move to those counties if they have to drive 40 or 50 miles to send their children to school? So this is something that we all need to work on. I believe that we need to provide equal education for all students regardless of where they live, and I think that this merging, consolidation will come about of its own accord. So I'm opposing this particular study. Thank you.