

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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SENATOR WEHRBEIN: All right, so that would yet to be coming if this would pass. Well, I'm wondering...the only...I guess the real objection, I've been ambivalent on this, but the real objection I have at this point is that predetermined, if you will, 163 school systems. And I'm just sitting here wondering if...if there was something such as in line 6 to go "to a detailed plan to rationally reduce the total number of school systems," period, or "in the standard cost grouping," period, so that we don't have a foregone conclusion of where it should lead. Because I don't know, in your definition, I'm not sure you're taking into account the sparsity and very sparse adequately or not. Obviously, I had a bill in several years ago that said we...I arbitrarily just cut them in half, went from 600 to 300. I still believe a school district per county is not a bad rationale but I don't know if it's the only rationale we should be using. I still think the unified is what we're causing today. At one time I envisioned larger school districts but still have the same number of schools, or similar, so that towns could still keep their school in many cases but have one superintendent for maybe even multicounties. I am not...I am not clear on that. I would support a study on that basis here, if that's where that was to lead, rather than maybe arbitrarily coming up with 163 school systems, which I'm thinking just based on what you say even you might admit that that was a little bit arbitrary because you took off 20 percent and looked at...I assume you looked at the pupil-teacher ratios and those kinds of things. So I guess I'm going to listen to the debate, but I would be much more comfortable if...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: ...we didn't have a preconceived number picked out, in this case 163 systems, and simply stopped at the end of the grouping in the standard cost grouping perhaps, or I'm reluctant to write it on the floor, but I, with a little more thought, I'd probably could support this amendment if we didn't write in a preconceived number; 2005 is actually quite a ways down the road. I think there would be a lot of discussion between here and there but I would like to have that a little bit cleaner and then I probably could support the amendment. Thank you.