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Department of Ed and it would eventually end up in the state report card. But at the building level, every parent and every taxpayer interested in how students were performing would see the grade that the students were receiving on the writing assessment. I think that gets away from much of the issue with one test and the problems we've had in other states with the cheating that went on and with some of the real problems that have emerged from going with one test. Most, in fact, every educator that I have talked to has said that writing is definitely one measure that we could use to try and indicate how students are doing in most other subject areas. Later we'll get into some of the details on what would be on that writing assessment. But for now, I would give the remaining time for the first overview to Senator Stuhr; and then we'll be moving to the amendments where we can get to some of the details of the bill. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Stuhr, you have about 3.5 minutes.

SENATOR STUHR: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the Legislature. First of all, it seems like we've been waiting a long time for the discussion on this bill. It was actually scheduled about a month ago; and then, as many of you remember, the Attorney General came out with his opinion and so now here we are about five weeks later discussing this bill. But I do want to thank also Senator Bohlke for her leadership in this area. But down to the facts, what does LB 812 do? As has been previously discussed, rather than one test which is currently in law, it will create school-based assessments with each school building administrator doing a national standardized test and then their own test. And this will measure student achievement, and this is most important I think, the biggest emphasis that why we are going to the school-based test is to measure the progress of student achievement, and then, second, how well their school is teaching the subject areas of reading, writing, math, science, social studies, and history. The assessment and reporting plan will include all public schools and public school students. The boards will adopt criteria for the inclusion of students with disabilities, new students to the school, and students with limited English proficiency. Problems with the current law, since Nebraska, we are actually the fiftieth state to have statewide assessments. And we have been able, I think,