

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

March 27, 2000 LB 812

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...to spend the money to set standards that nobody is going to use. You're just giving people work. I'm shocked that conservatives go for that. Conservatives and business people are always saying you graduate kids who don't know how to read. Then we say, okay, we want to get a system of standards so we can see what's happening in the school. No, we don't want to do that, uh-uh, no, brother, no, sister. We want local control. Well, maybe...and I'm just using Senator Stuhr as an example, maybe mule skinner standards are alright in York, but I don't want my child to be educated according to mule skinner standards. And I don't want those people who have interests contrary to my child but who are in the classroom over my child cheating my child, so I want a standard that I can use and that is clear to everybody. I support very strongly Senator Beutler's amendment.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Chambers. Senator Wickersham, on the Chambers amendment.

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: Mr. President, members of the body, I'm...I hope it isn't overly offensive to anybody, but I'm not going to speak directly to the Chambers amendment. I'm more concerned about the underlying issue, and that's what we do with testing and accountability. I would say that initially I was attracted to the idea that I think Senator Beutler is promoting through his series of amendments, and that is a single test to be administered on a statewide basis to children of various grades so that we could determine whether they all knew the same thing in the same way, and thereby assure ourselves that they knew something. I don't know how else to describe it. That sounds a little bit odd when I talk about it in that way, but I think that's what it amounted to. Well, then I began to read more about the issue and I became aware of problems that other states had in adopting a single test, because they weren't content to know whether a student knew something or what it was they knew. They then utilized that information to impose other requirements on the schools. In some cases, they would close a school if they didn't meet the testing objectives, and there were other sanctions, in some cases rewards, that they would apply based on the tests. Well, that...that...the conclusion of all that was that the administrators and the teachers responded, as you think