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right now I'm opposed to his amendment. Could I ask him a question?

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Beutler, would you yield?

SENATOR BEUTLER: Sure.

SENATOR JONES: Yes. Explain a little bit more why you want this mandate on the state in place of leaving it local control. I was out...I was out when they talked about it earlier, and could you explain that a little bit more to me.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator, there are different ways of explaining or looking at it, I guess, but I'm trying to follow through on the system that we put in place a couple of years ago, and the Legislature put it in place. I mean we voted for it. And that system envisioned standards someplace, and it required the assessment of how the students are doing vis-a-vis those standards. And then this bill comes along and says that the state standards, which we had originally put into the bill would be the basis for the test for all the students, that was dropped. So now we're not required to test against the state standards. So what standards are we to test against? It's already mandated in the bill that there be an assessment. So what are they assessing? Whose standards? Which standards? So if there are no state standards, I guess it's the local school district standards. But if we make the assumption that there will be an assessment, I think we're also making the assumption that there will be standards to test against. And so all this is saying is let's be logical. Let's have the standards there, whatever they want them to be, except they must be as rigorous as the state standards, that's all that's mandated, and then the assessment portion that's already in the bill and nobody wants to change, that assessment portion then will mean something.

SENATOR JONES: Do you see a difference from one end of the state to the other as to what the standards should be? I know I've got a lot of children that come from grade school and go through high school and get four-year Regents, you know, out there. Now do you think that should be different from one end of the state to the other?