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except that if there is a reduction in core services funding, they would share in the reduction; if there's an increase, they would share in the increase. There is no fiscal note here. In effect, this is something that the ESUs have agreed upon. And if you had a merger occur, then in effect the distribution formula would take whatever amount of money was appropriated by the Legislature and distribute that according to this new arrangement. So again, the committee amendment really is only a part of this. But I urge your adoption of the committee amendment. Thank you.

SPEAKER BROMM: Thank you, Senator Raikes. Senator Wehrbein.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Mr. President, members of the body, I would support the amendment. I wanted to ask Senator Raikes a question.

SPEAKER BROMM: Senator Raikes.

SENATOR RAIKES: Yes.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Senator Raikes, this sounds like advanced "economics-ese," if you will. Is it...would it be accurate to say that they will get, after merger, the same as they would have gotten before the merger?

SENATOR RAIKES: Yes. That is the intent. Now, life becomes complicated. And if the Appropriations Committee would choose to keep the core service funding exactly the same in each of the next several years, that would be what would happen. But if the Appropriations Committee found it necessary, say, to reduce core services funding, then if you've got \$250,000 for each ESU that was going to merge, for a total of \$500,000, and the Appropriations Committee decided, say, to reduce the funding by 10 percent, then instead of them being held harmless at \$250,000 each, they would be held harmless at \$225,000 for that...

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Thank you. I understand.

SENATOR RAIKES: ...or...yes. A total of \$450,000. Thank you.