

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

April 22, 2003 LB 759

Senator Quandahl, there's something really tempting in here for me to vote on. And you all who know me know that I have constantly and continuously said we should not be giving money to private schools for any kinds of purposes at all. We can't even fund our own schools, let alone any private schools, and I would be highly in favor of eliminating the funds that are now going to private institutions for cancer research. However, I do believe, like Senator Beutler, that you can't just cut these programs off. It would be grossly unfair to Creighton University or Boys Town or any of those institutions to do so on the spur of the moment up here on the floor. I believe that we should seriously, seriously examine that issue, and we should find out how many different funding streams there are going to our private schools in this state for whatever reasons, whether it's scholarships or research or whatever. We don't have the money to do that and do our own schools adequately. It's not our job to provide the funds for private schools in this state. So I am sorely tempted by this amendment, but I think Senator Beutler hit the nail on the head when he said that this is attractive and could possibly get 25 votes because there may be something in it for everyone. That may be true, but if you can't go through here and tell me exactly what every single program is in here and exactly what those funds are used for, then I don't think you should be voting to do something like that, and as...how long those programs are supposed to last anyway. I think Senator Beutler made a really good point about the Metropolitan Class Reserve Fund. I'm not necessarily in favor of that one, but that was part of a big package. So that's where we are. We've made those kind of commitments. You don't back out on commitments you've made as a state, just like you don't back out on the provisions of LB 775 just on the spur of the moment. You do it through a very considered policy and you do it with a lot of public input. I predict if this amendment would be adopted today we would be overrun, overrun with protests about this amendment. You would not hear the end of it. So I think Senator Quandahl was proposing this on a very serious note, but I would very seriously say to you, tempting as it is, that we shouldn't do that at this time. If we're going to do anything we should send it back to the Appropriations Committee to have a hearing on doing this before we do something like this, and it's probably the responsible way to do it.