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make up that difference. The other half tried to maintain their budget the best they could. I do think that, and Senator Beutler just touched on it, the certification, changing of the certification of state aid, the applicable allowable growth rates and the Class I budget authority, changing those dates from February 1 basically to June 15 of this year is putting a little bit of pressure...quite a bit of pressure on the schools in the fact that they don't really know exactly what kind of certification they are going to be having. I think what probably most of them are trying to do is budget for the worst scenario. So that is happening this year just because of the unusual circumstances that we're in. I do believe that we have addressed the special education provision. We've had some talk about that this afternoon. We did allow to put back that \$22 million. We all know that it's a federal mandate for schools in that they actually have to accommodate those needs in those school districts, so we are allowing those provisions. I do basically feel that LB 540 is a good bill. Education has always been, I believe, a very high priority for our state, and funding for K through 12 education is certainly, I believe, one of the highest priorities we must have. Our children are our future. And I hear about some of the horror stories in some other states. I have a relative that teaches in Oregon. Oregon is suffering some really difficult times, but they have relied, I believe,...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR STUHR: ...70 percent on state funding, and with the decline in their state revenues they're going to four-day-a-week schools. They are actually having classes of 40 students. They are shortening their school year and I would hope that we would never have to resort to those kinds of measures here in Nebraska and that we can all support LB 540 and do the best we can to maintain the quality of our schools in our state. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Stuhr. We're discussing AM1287, which is an amendment brought by the Education Committee to LB 540. It's a little "buzzy" at times in here. Please try to keep it down. Senator Jones, followed by Senator Bromm, Vrtiska, Bourne, Quandahl, Beutler, and Wehrbein. Senator