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schools, I guess in a sense, are indifferent between whether they're...as long as they're funded, whether they're funded with state funds or local property taxes. Unfortunately, we are not indifferent at this point. We don't have enough state funds. We're going to have to economize, if you will, so that's the reason for the proposal to increase the levy lid. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Raikes and Senator Vrtiska. Senator Bourne, on the committee amendments offered by the Education Committee.

SENATOR BOURNE: Thank you, Mr. President. Members, I rise in support over all with LB 540 as amended, but I wondered if Senator Raikes would yield to a question or two.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Raikes, would you respond?

SENATOR RAIKES: Yes.

SENATOR BOURNE: You and I have had some discussions on my concern over the 0 percent growth for '03-04 and '04-05 and I've been trying to think of an analogy that would illustrate what I am...how I want to articulate this question in a very complex situation, and I finally decided maybe an appropriate analogy would be our 309 fund. As you're aware, we have kind of a backlog of projects in our state buildings that need to be done and it seems like we're constantly taking money that was from the cigarette tax that was going into 309 and then we earmark it for the technology fund and then we might earmark it for the ditch project or something along those lines, and we get further and further behind in terms of maintaining our state buildings. And what my concern is, is that if we have 0 percent growth that we will get further and further behind in terms of how we are funding education, and by that I mean if we have 0 percent growth what does that do to the formula four years from now? You know, if...say we spend \$500 million a year on our schools in state aid and if we maintain the growth as it is now before LB 540, say we'd be spending \$600 million five years from now just for round numbers' sake, but if we go to 0 percent growth we'll only, four or five years from now, be spending \$520 million or some other number. You see what I'm trying to