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LB 540

right place to make that decision. I strongly believe that. It is not for the state to dictate. That's not what our education system has been built on in this state. I believe that our local boards do have the needs and interests of the children of their district foremost in the decisions that they make. I believe it is a mandate to school boards and I believe in the philosophy of local control. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Stuhr. Senator Connealy, on the Bourne amendment to LB 540.

SENATOR CONNEALY: Thank you, Mr. President and members. Senator Bourne alluded to a resolution by the state school board and it has a lot of whereases and lays out the problems of not only schools but also the state, where we are with funds and where schools are in relationship to the job they have to do. But the point of the resolution was, be it resolved, the State Board of Education calls upon Governor Mike Johanns and the State Legislature and Nebraska schools to protect our students and their schools by reducing spending, if necessary, in areas that would least affect the quality of classroom education. So this amendment I think just backs up that direction. It gives direction. It's not a mandate. It doesn't have penalties. I think a lot of what we do is giving directions to our schools and I rise in support of the Bourne amendment. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you. Senator Raikes, on the Bourne amendment.

SENATOR RAIKES: Thank you, Mr. President. Members of the Legislature, I want to reiterate, emphasize, my opposition to this amendment. I think there are several things that have been suggested here that I don't think match reality. First, Senator Bourne, in talking about said he thinks it's important that we provide books to students. You can't provide books in this. Let me read for you: Classroom expenses does not include technology, equipment, supplies, maintenance, the cost of noncertified (sic) employees, transportation, extracurricular activities and so on. All it is is certified (sic) teachers. If you need supplies to offer the class, you can't do it. You