

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

May 7, 2003

LB 540

can't do it. If you want to release an administrator who holds a...a certificated administrator, you can't do it. We have school boards in place to operate schools. Many of you have been in that position. You know the difficulties. We need to have faith in what they can do. We need to let them do their job. This is absolutely the wrong direction. I think this is clearly going to make it much more difficult. Let me mention one other thing. He said, well, this is an intent and not a mandate. Absolutely wrong. We have clear intent language right now. This would convert that intent language into a mandate. It would trap schools into a situation where, despite declining enrollments, they couldn't reduce their teaching staff, they couldn't reduce administrators. I simply don't think this is something you want to do, not now, probably not any time, but particularly not now. So again, I hope I've made it clear that I oppose this amendment. Thank you.

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

SENATOR BOURNE: Thank you, Mr. President, members. I was talking to Senator Cunningham and I kind of lost my place here. I just kind of wanted to reiterate again our constitution says that free instruction is the priority and that's what I've tried to do in this amendment. Senator Connealy talked a little bit about a resolution by the State Board of Education that calls upon...the State Board of Education calls upon the Governor, the State Legislature and the public schools to protect our students and their schools by reducing spending, if necessary, in areas that would least affect the quality of classroom education. That's what I'm trying to accomplish here. Senator Raikes is right, it is a mandate. It says "shall." Any reductions to a school district budget shall affect classroom expenses as a last resort. Is there a technical problem with the bill? I don't know. I think that it makes sense. I'm reiterating what's in the constitution, what our State Board of Education has articulated as the proper policy for this state. That's simply all I'm trying to do. Senator Stuhr mentioned that she has e-mails from administrators and they talked about that. Well, I've had the same e-mails and they've complained before about the sky is falling on other things and it's not materialized.