

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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FLOOR DEBATE

May 7, 2003

LB 540

please call the roll.

CLERK: (Roll call vote taken, Legislative Journal page 1680.)
22 ayes, 11 nays, Mr. President, on the amendment.

SPEAKER BROMM: The amendment is not adopted. Next amendment,
Mr. Clerk. I raise the call.

CLERK: Mr. President, the next amendment I have, Senator
Bourne. Senator, you had filed AM1717. I have a note you'd
like to withdraw that and offer AM1757. Senator Bourne? You
have the next amendment, Senator. Mr. President, Senator Jensen
would move to amend, AM1758. (Legislative Journal page 1681.)

SPEAKER BROMM: Senator Jensen, you're recognized to open on
your amendment.

SENATOR JENSEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the
Legislature. I'd like to start off by giving you a few
statistics that I think are somewhat revealing, where Nebraska
stands in relationship to the rest of the states. We're eighth
in the United States in the number of school districts. We're
forty-third in teacher pay. We're twenty-first in per pupil
expenditures. We are number one as far as being the lowest in
student-teacher ratio. We're also number one in the lowest
number of persons per school district. We have approximately
about 3,000 persons for every school district. Colorado has
25,000. All the rest of the states have a much higher figure.
We rate thirty-eighth in total population. I might mention that
in 1960, we had 284,000 students; 13,000 teachers. In 2000, 40
years later, we had 287,000 students, 3,000 more than 40 years
earlier; and we had 20,785 teachers, 7,000 more. And as I look
at our situation in education, and I am very concerned, first of
all, about the education of our children. And I think the
number-one issue that we have is providing a quality education
across our state to do that. And so I'm offering AM1736
(sic--AM1758) as an attempt to encourage a better system for our
children, as well as to encourage consolidation of school
administration; not districts, but administration. Nebraska has
currently five hundred and, I believe, eighteen school
districts, for a population of one million seven hundred. That