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LB 540

of our most difficult issues to deal with, in coming up with the budget, is what the fiscal situation is going to be in those out years. This simply adds a \$50 million weight on our backs in trying to deal with that. For all those reasons, again I urge you not to support this amendment. I appreciate the discussion. I hope it's clear to you that LB 540 without this amendment is something that is fiscally responsible. It is admittedly stringent budgetwise on schools, but it is also something that school systems have agreed to work with. I think we need to stay where we are. Thank you very much.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Raikes. Senator Vrtiska. Is Senator Vrtiska on the floor? I see he is not. Senator Bourne. He waives the opportunity. Senator Stuhr.

SENATOR STUHR: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. I just want to rise in opposition to the amendment. Serving on the Education Committee, we have worked hard on LB 540. I believe that it does indicate good fiscal management. We have to realize that we are in extraordinary times. This is just not business as usual. And I disagree with Senator Maxwell. I've been around for a while as far as whether property taxes have been lowered because of state aid. Yes, that is a debate. But I know back in the early nineties, LB 1059 was the first attempt to get more of a balance between property taxes, sales tax and increasing state aid so that we could reduce that balance on property taxes. I think we've made some strides through the years. I must admit I was opposed to LB 806, which was the new school aid formula that we're working with. It's a very complicated formula but I believe it needs to be. As I continue to work on the Education Committee, we have a very diversified state; it is very, very difficult to put everyone and to pass laws that accommodate all of the needs. But we have tried, we've made some changes. We've done some tweaking through the years. We'll continue to do that. And we've been having some interim studies to look at how we can address the state aid formula, and I know that we will continue to do that. I do not want to tie our hands, as a Legislature, for those out years. LB 540 looks at the next two years. I think that's prudent. I think that's what we need to do, and I oppose this amendment. Thank you.