

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

April 2, 2004 LB 1091

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Okay. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK PRESIDING

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Kremer.

SENATOR KREMER: Thank you, Senator Cudaback and members of the body. I, too, agree with I think some of others who have said that I believe in incentives more than I do forced consolidation. And in a minute I'd like to ask Senator Raikes some questions. But I remember the incentives that we had before, and I'm not sure which year they started but I think it was in about 2000. The first program that started out, there were more...more schools consolidated and was using the money faster than what we had, and there was not enough money to hold true on our commitment to them. And I think it was Senator Coordsen's bill that made that whole, but it also extended the incentive program to several more years, and I think this...that bill was one of the very first bills, when we saw that we were starting to get in trouble financially, that was pulled off of Final Reading and that extension was taken away. And kind of the reason I remember that is because my priority bill that year was to fund the distance learning costs for all the schools that do not have distance learning. And I'd like to ask Senator Raikes a couple questions.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Raikes.

SENATOR KREMER: Are all the schools hooked up and facilitated for distance learning now, do you know? At that time there were 20-some that weren't and we took lottery money. And that was my priority bill, and we got it stuck on Final Reading, didn't even have to go through General File. And I was wondering if that has taken place yet. Do you have any idea on that?

SENATOR RAIKES: It's a good question, Senator. I think it has and there may not have been every school system that took advantage of the program, but some of them chose not to.

SENATOR KREMER: Some of them, they chose not to, I think, yeah.