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FLOOR DEBATE

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can be regarded as either an additional million dollars of lottery money or a million dollars of General Fund money. And then in that following year, which would be the second year of the payments, for those...for those schools that decided to take advantage in the second year, \$1 million. So the likely would be a total of \$4 million over a three-year period.

SENATOR BOURNE: Okay. But...that makes sense, but if we commit a million dollars now and other...and schools commit to consolidating, the liability does not go away, even if we've only committed a million dollars. And what I'm saying is if we pass your amendment and schools opt to do the consolidation, our exposure could be well in excess of the amount that we're funding today.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Raikes, would you...

SENATOR RAIKES: Yes. Okay, when you...when you say funding today, now...

SENATOR BOURNE: We're putting a million dollars into a fund to encourage consolidation, and we've heard that up to \$35 million of consolidation...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR BOURNE: ...opportunities could be obligated by the state, and we don't have the funds. And so what I'm saying is, is why are we...why are we encouraging schools to consolidate with a carrot that is small when our potential exposure could be in the tens of millions? And if these schools opt to do that, even though we've set aside a million, we would have to find another \$30 some million in the worst case scenario, or am I totally misunderstanding what you're trying to do?

SENATOR RAIKES: No, I think though that maybe the best way to address that is if you looked at the impact on the TEEOSA obligation from the...to the state, the state's obligation to provide funding to school systems through the state aid formula, if you look at the impact of...on that of having school systems reorganize to the...in the fashion that would create a