

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

February 11, 2005 LB 126

mandated by the Legislature. Should it be...should this bill be passed because it's needed for greater efficiency? Only 19.4 percent agreed with that statement, less than 20 percent. Now obviously, this is not a scientific poll because anyone can call in or enter into the computer question. It's not a Gallup Poll. It's just the people who feel strongly about this question that offered their opinion. I think it's a fairly accurate representation of this particular community's feelings, and most likely most of the participants were from Lincoln and surrounding areas, at least in Channel 10/11's broadcast area. I think that if there had been a statewide poll, the numbers would likely have shown even more disparity. Now, I did not take part in the poll or the numbers would have been even greater that way, too. But when the public is telling you this should be a local decision, these are your constituents. They're telling you what they want, and it is probably your responsibility to take that into consideration a little more. We have taken a look at the introductory remarks, also the remarks in the public hearing on LB 126, and we want to measure those comments against factual evidence. What I'm going to tell you are statements that were made by Senator Raikes which were documented from the Clerk of the Legislature's transcript following the hearing. And after each of Senator Raikes' statements is the rebuttal of that particular statement. Senator Raikes said: It, LB 126, does not require that any school building be closed. These are our comments. In the Education Committee bill summary prepared by Tammy Barry, the committee counsel: Beginning on June 15, 2006, school boards would be prohibited from taking action to close an elementary attendance center if (a) the fall membership of the attendance center for the prior school year included a total number of resident students that was at least 2.5 times the number of grades offered; and--and that's the tricky part--and the attendance center is at least ten miles from another elementary attendance center within the district, or the attendance center is the only elementary attendance center located within the boundaries of an incorporated city or village. I would like to know why those particular figures were chosen--2.5 times the number of resident students. Why 2.5? If you, perhaps, in your Class I school don't have any 2nd graders, for example, are you shot out of the saddle right at that point, or does the average