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to focus on this before--but to my amazement, we've got schools in this state that are educating students at \$30,000 to \$40,000 per student per year. I can't defend that. I think it's absolutely indefensible that we would spend that much to operate some of these small schools. And I think that's where our attention needs to focus. I'm also finding many, many Class I schools, quite a number of them, that are operating at costs below the statewide average. Somehow they're able to operate those schools very economically. And from all accounts, they're doing a great job academically. In other words, those schools aren't broken. So why are we messing with them? If they're not broken, don't try to fix them. That's my attitude. I'm also told there are some Class III schools that are way out of line budgetwise. This bill doesn't address those schools. I think we've got to focus our attention on those high-cost schools and see what we can't do to nudge them further toward consolidation, because \$30,000 to \$40,000 per student, I'm sorry, that's too much. We can't defend that. I don't...and I know there's a lot of talk about amendments and ways of getting this bill to move forward. What I'd like to see is an amendment that gives some protection to the Class I schools that are performing properly academically, and they're in line within a reasonable band of operation in terms of their cost structure. I think those schools deserve to be protected. And I don't know if there's anybody who's crafting any kind of an amendment along those lines. I've heard some talk of it. But if there is, that would have some appeal to me. So I'll continue to learn and listen, and we'll see how the bill goes. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Foley. Senator McDonald, on your amendment.

SENATOR McDONALD: Mr. President, members of the body, I hope everyone was listening to Senator Foley's testimony this morning. And he's right on track. Let's face it. Some schools' cost per student is much less than the affiliated district that they would be forced to consolidate into. Why would we want to close a school that the kids are getting a good education at far less than what they would be paying and that we would be paying for them in a Class VI...a Class XII (sic)