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LB 425, 577

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Raikes. You've heard the opening on the Raikes amendment, AM1568, which is an amendment to LB 425. Open for discussion. Senator Erdman.

SENATOR ERDMAN: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the Legislature. I was wondering if Senator Raikes would yield to a couple questions.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Raikes, would you yield to a question?

SENATOR RAIKES: Yes.

SENATOR ERDMAN: Senator Raikes, there...the two provisions are the special ed funding, which is approximately \$6.5 million, and then the remainder is the early childhood funding. Is that about right?

SENATOR RAIKES: Right.

SENATOR ERDMAN: Okay. The bill that you referenced in regards to this, the early childhood education, is LB 577,...

SENATOR RAIKES: Right.

SENATOR ERDMAN: ...which is Senator Schimek's priority bill. I notice that on the fiscal note of her bill the fiscal impact would be \$9.4 million this year, and \$18.5 million the next year to fulfill the purposes of LB 577, and yet in your amendment before us it's about \$1.7 million annually. Could you explain?

SENATOR RAIKES: I will, and thank you for the question because I should have mentioned that. LB 577, in fact, the way it will be introduced, will have no fiscal impact at all in the upcoming biennium, and that's...or the biennium we're budgeting for. And that's of course because of a committee amendment which sharply cuts it back. The two provisions in LB 577 are expansion of the early childhood grant program, which we're talking about here, and in effect that grant program is used in LB 577 as a gatekeeper, if you will. If a grant program is established and