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LB 126

parental support. LB 126 may not seek to, but I'll guarantee you that LB 126 alienates the community from the public school system. Now I don't know what kind of forum we're going to see here in the next few minutes, next few days, I don't know. I have spent more time on this bill, and I know the Speaker has as well, I've spent more time on this bill than any priority bill I've had, including the one this year. And a couple of weeks ago we had an agreement that related to some autonomy in the operating of a school and that was pulled right out from under me, out from under us, because it was agreed upon in the group. That disturbs me. What disturbs me even more is if LB 126 becomes law, it's going to be harder to pass bond issues around Nebraska because there's alienation in the process. And then, when I hear that there's a desire to level the playing field because this Class I school over here might provide a little more opportunity to their students when the assimilating district cannot do that or chooses not to do that, we need to have LB 126 as a quality-driven issue instead of a quantity-of-dollar issue and especially when the quantity of dollars is not even really disputed. Class I schools across Nebraska have operated efficiently and effectively. Are there some high-cost districts? Yes. Are there some good reasons for that to be that way? Yes. They're answering state mandates. In fact, there are some points within what we might be looking at today on amendments, there are some points that are more state mandates.

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR SMITH: Is that how we want to operate? In some respects, I'm glad that this negotiation has fallen apart because I was a little nervous about that compromise, to be quite honest, Senator Chambers. We need to make sure that quality is at the forefront of this debate, and that quality comes about from the local community coming together to support those programs in a school because you get more parental support with that, you have happier students. And as a result, you have happier taxpayers, and there are just a few left in Nebraska. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Smith. Senator Fischer,