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LB 126

communities, than Lincoln Public Schools would ever hope for, in a comparative analysis. I am astonished, I am astonished when I hear that, well, we consolidated a long time ago so you can now, too. There were different reasons back then. We've had various proposals. I know that Senator Heidemann ripped in half his little exhibit there. I feel like several of our proposals have been ripped in half by the other side. I'm still awaiting a critical analysis of some of our proposals, other than, well, that won't work. Do we want to make it work? Do we want to encourage innovation and excellence, or do we just want something that all looks the same? Because that's what LB 126 will do, and especially with AM1672. It is an attempt to make everything the same. You know, and if you have to take away some excellence here and some excellence there to make everything the same, well, then it's better off. I disagree with that. If we want to encourage innovation and education excellence, we need to allow the utmost of local control, the utmost of local autonomy, because that's what is best for students, that's what taxpayers appreciate and will support, and even pay more, as Westside Community Schools has indicated.

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR SMITH: They'll even pay more, when they are convinced that their tax dollars are making a difference. I've been discouraged, long before I came to the Legislature, when some bond issues wouldn't pass in Gering. They needed to. In fact, I even predicted, years ago, that Gering would have an increase in enrollment and need some square footage. There were some naysayers then, but it's happening now. There are very positive things happening around public education in Nebraska. But even as we have quality public education, we're not having public buy-in. How do we encourage more public buy-in for our quality system? LB 126 is certainly not the way. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Smith. Senator Mines, followed by Senator Janssen. The question has been called. Do I see five hands? I do see five hands. The question before the body is, shall debate cease on the Raikes' amendment, AM1672. All in favor vote aye; those opposed vote nay. Voting on