

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

June 3, 2005

LB 126

SENATOR CUDABACK PRESIDING

SENATOR CUDABACK: We will pass over LB 683A. Mr. Clerk, next motion, LB 126.

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Raikes would move that LB 126 become law notwithstanding the objections of the Governor.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Raikes, to open on your motion.

SENATOR RAIKES: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the Legislature. The Governor has asked you to sustain his veto of LB 126. I'm asking you to join me in voting to override his veto so that this measure, which we the Legislature have worked so hard to develop over the past three years, can become law. Let me address the points the Governor included in his veto message. The Governor would have you believe that LB 126 would not result in a more cost-efficient K-12 system. He did not mention the \$12.7 million that our own Fiscal Office estimated could be realized on an annual basis by simply allowing local K-12 school boards to decide how best to use the resources available to them. This, as you know, is local property tax money. I know he doesn't believe that it's okay to use over \$800,000 of taxpayer money to fund 11 schools that have no students. He failed to mention that the average expenditure per student in Class I schools, according to the most recent data we have, is more than \$1,500 per student higher than in K-12 schools, or that we have Class I schools now operating with budgeted amounts per students of more than \$30,000. He can't believe it is cost-effective to maintain 231 school districts' boards, budgets, and administrative units that serve less than 3 percent of the students. Let me remind you, 47 percent of the school districts in the state serve less than 3 percent of the students. If the Governor is saying this is a cost-efficient arrangement, he is simply not aware of the facts. Apparently, the Governor is suggesting that in the event of a significant policy change which serves the greater good, help should not be provided to those school districts affected in the transition. Accordingly, we should not have honored the wishes of those who thought we should allow representation on school boards before decisions are made to close buildings, we should not have