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LB 126

vote no; number four, for the kids; number three, for the kids; number two, for the kids; and the number one reason, for the kids. Give the rest of my time back to the Chair.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Heidemann. Senator Erdman, followed by Senator Baker.

SENATOR ERDMAN: Yeah, Mr. President, I'd yield my time to Senator Louden.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Louden, you have almost five minutes.

SENATOR LOUDEN: Thank you, Senator Erdman and members of the Legislature. As Senator Raikes says, they've been working on this thing for three years and thank God he hasn't been working on it for five or Lord only knows where we might end up at. There's something here that we're not looking at. I mean, you have a problem so why not work at where the problem is? We have Class VI districts in the western part of the state. We have some in central Nebraska. These are, in fact, K-12 districts and they are quite efficient. When he talks about his 237 Class I districts, how many of them are involved in a Class VI district and how many of them are actually part of a K-12 district, probably the most efficient type of education in the rural areas of Nebraska? LB 126 junks the whole thing. They don't go in and use any way of working on the districts that have a problem. They want to talk about consolidation. I think Senator Stuhr has mentioned that consolidation in her areas that they're all K-12 districts now. If you will look in some of the material that comes out from the Education Department, you'll notice that Heartland, which is in her district, is one of the highest cost per pupil K-12 districts in the state of Nebraska. So you're not necessarily going to get a savings just because you consolidate and go to a K-12 system. First of all, when you talk about the 3 percent kids that take up 47 percent of the money or whatever, those 3 percent kids are still going to be out there. They're still going to be out there in rural areas or...and where we have long distance of travel. How many of you sitting in here today have rode a school bus here in the last six months or year? The kids are the ones that are going to be starting to ride farther distances to go to school. Sure, you