

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

March 29, 2006      LB 1256

because we need to spend it on the correction system, we need to spend it on special ed. Well, we figured out a way to do it, in this case, to do it without upsetting any applecarts. A few years ago when the Omaha metro superintendents still were meeting together, I met with them and, to a person, they identified as the most critical issue that they had about their school systems the number of children that entered school unprepared to be in school, not having had the...a difference in opportunities, a difference in ages of the kids that were coming into school, the number of...the difference between kids who have had high-quality experiences or who...by virtue of their socioeconomic situation versus at-risk kids. Just from a language standpoint, a child who is at risk has a 500-word vocabulary, versus a 5,000-word vocabulary for a small child that has been involved either in an early childhood program or is in the enviable position of not having the socioeconomic issues that put them at risk. There's a difference in social skills.

SENATOR BAKER PRESIDING

SENATOR BAKER: One minute.

SENATOR BROWN: And so we can get back dollarwise in a fairly short period of time more than what we are talking about here, a great deal more than what we're talking about here, and that's just looking at it from...strictly from a financial standpoint for the state, not even looking at how much better these kids are going to be able to do in society, how...what investment we have made with them. And so I strongly support the bill and look forward to voting on it. Thank you.

SENATOR BAKER: Thank you, Senator Brown. Senator Louden.

SENATOR LOUDEN: Thank you, Mr. President and members. I think this early childhood education is, no doubt, very worthwhile. As time goes on and you have dysfunctional families and they're scattered out around, and some of the other relatives aren't nearby to help with them and that sort of thing, why, we have more problems with it. The only problem I have with it at the present time is the way some of the funding is done. Now, as