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body. I rise in support again of the amendment. I rise in support of the bill. And I wanted to take a few moments this morning to talk to my rural colleagues about why I think it's important for them to support this bill. They said, this doesn't affect us; why should I push a green light for this? Well, I'm going to tell you very simply, because if, in fact, Douglas County becomes one school district and they begin to house half the students in this state, you will find that OPS will control the state aid formula, the state Department of Education, and then you will have a battle on your hands for every nickel and dime you need for your schools. That's just reality. It's the power that comes with numbers. And if there were no other reason than that, I would suggest to you that it would be good to support a bill that would protect district choice in the city of Omaha. I think that the committee has struggled long and hard. There are a number of amendments to work through. I will support several of them. And I think that some of them we may actually even address on Select. But I hope we can move this bill through the system today on General because we switch at 1:30 to Final Reading. And we really, because of the time crunch, need to move forward with this bill. Even if there's fine-tuning that needs to be addressed next year, that's okay. What's important is that we stay out of court and that the taxpayers of this state don't spend all their hard-earned tax dollars on both sides of the battle fighting this for three or four years and stymieing the growth of the city of Omaha because we need to bring security to the economy of that area so that our residential areas can continue to grow and build and service the industries that are there, the people that they need to work in those jobs. So I would commend it to you and tell you it's timely and it's important. We need to move forward. Even if we are not at a perfect product, there is time to address perfection in the future. Let's move forward with a good idea. Thank you.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Thank you, Senator Redfield. Senator Mines, you're next in line to speak.

SENATOR MINES: Thank you, Madam Chair. Would Senator Raikes yield, please?