

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

April 6, 2006

LB 1024

Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK PRESIDING

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Redfield. Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Thank you. Mr. President, members of the Legislature, let me put some people's mind at ease by saying the following. If there is a chance to put in place a program that will benefit the children I'm concerned about...and who are those children? If you hear me mention it, I will say black children and poor white children. There are poor white children currently going to some of these so-called academies and they are cheated too. So my interest is in quality education. I would not push for a program which on its face is unconstitutional, because it would mean nothing, it would achieve nothing. I'm not one of those who wants to give people false hope by thinking that for once the Legislature paid attention to our problem, which we cannot solve by going to the local school board. I would not create that false hope by pushing for something like this and then have it pulled away because it's unconstitutional. It would be better not to do anything in the first place. I believe this will work. I've been advocating it for years. I simply couldn't get anybody with enough interest to cooperate as happens to be the case now. Remember this, if you can keep it in your mind during the discussion that we're having here: Nothing in this amendment creates segregation, as if that meant anything to the people here or to OPS. How long do you think we've had the segregated conditions in Omaha? Did you hear Senator Lindsay come down here with OPS saying you ought to do something about that? Did you hear Mackiel, the superintendent, ever say that we've got to break up the segregation in the Omaha Public Schools? The only program that offered a scattering and a smattering of children in districts other than which was predominantly their own race was the one that Mackiel killed. He said we're going back to neighborhood schools. So I think Senator Lindsay is being forced to advocate a very hypocritical, cynical position, because he talked differently when he was a member of the Legislature, and he knows that the current segregation in the