

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

April 10, 2006 LB 1024

assuming LB 1024 goes forward, is that one entity, I don't even believe it will be Omaha Public Schools, somebody will sue and they will challenge the bill based on segregation. The line of cases is clear. In my mind, there is no doubt what we have done. Somebody will sue. The entire bill will be struck down and we'll start over. It might be a year from now, a year and a half from now, two years, I don't know. But the reality is if we continue to go forward without adopting Senator Cornett's reconsideration motion, this is really an exercise in futility in that the bill may pass, there will be litigation, the entire bill will be struck down, and then we'll have to start over. I think we need to give some stability to our students, to our kids, to our parents, to the districts involved. I think we need to slow down and essentially start over. I support Senator Cornett's motion because what we did is absolutely state-based segregation, endorsed segregation by the state of Nebraska. Senator Kruse touched on this as well. I serve on the Education Committee. While Senator Redfield did introduce a bill that touched upon, touched upon breaking up certain districts that were over a certain size, it did not specifically do what the Senator Chambers amendment did, through our adoption of that. So as you all know, every bill has to have a hearing. I don't believe you can argue that there was a sufficient hearing regarding the Senator Chambers amendment. I will tell you after, if you recall, all three bills or four bills that dealt with the boundary issue between OPS and the suburban districts were held together, Senator Redfield introduced her bill and, again, it did not touch on precisely what Senator Chambers' amendment proposes to do. The committee in Exec Sessions never discussed breaking up the Omaha Public Schools district. They never discussed breaking up the Millard School District. They never discussed any other boundary things similarly to what is proposed in Senator Chambers' amendment. I think we've made a huge mistake in policy. I think the emotions are running high. I think we are not considering what is the best policy course for our students. We're simply trying to lash out, for lack of a better way to say it, at OPS because they made us mad, or at Millard because they made us mad, or perhaps at Senator Raikes because of past bills that were passed. I don't believe that we are actually making the best policy choices for our students. With that, I'm going to support Senator Cornett's amendment, her