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that a parental decision, whether you send your child to kindergarten or even to school prior to the time when we've mandated that it's necessary for them to attend. There have also been some concerns brought up regarding funding, and if I could request that Senator Raikes would answer some questions.

SENATOR RAIKES: Yes.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Raikes?

SENATOR HOWARD: Senator Raikes, if you could share with us your wisdom on the funding formula, to clarify some questions regarding the cost of this all-day kindergarten program.

SENATOR RAIKES: Well, Senator, I'll try. With the bill the way it is proposed, there is no additional funding offered in the formula. There is no additional budget authority. There is no other additional money. Now to the extent schools incorporate all-day kindergarten programs in their offerings, they may do it by using unused budget authority or they may reprioritize their spending some other way. To the extent they use additional...or unused budget authority, their spending may increase, which, as you know, would increase the needs calculation two years down the road. But that could happen based on all-day kindergarten or any other sort of a program. So there is...I think the most direct answer, there is no additional state obligation, financial obligation, called upon because of this requirement for all-day kindergarten in the year 2009-2010.

SENATOR HOWARD: Thank you, Senator Raikes. I don't think anyone understands school funding formulas any better than you do, and I appreciate your sharing that information with us. The last concern I will address with you this evening is regarding our zealotness in promoting the birth to three program that Senator Speaker Brashear brought in to us, and in fact I do support that as well, and seconded the amendment to advance it from the Education Committee. But if we are looking at a program to provide education services, opportunities for infants and toddlers, we certainly can't afford to drop the ball as children grow older. There is a complete spectrum to be addressed here in terms of children's education, children's