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experiences, and children's opportunities. All-day kindergarten certainly will offer the best opportunity for learning for children. There's an article that's recently been published in the newspaper regarding children and their ability to learn, and the State Department of Education sees it this way: A lot of children these days are coming to kindergarten without much experience. They need help with vocabulary, they need assistance with social skills, and many are starting from scratch with numbers. If they are going to be ready...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR HOWARD: ...when they enter serious stuff--thank you, sir--in the first grade, they need more time with their kindergarten teachers and their peers. Children across the state need all-day kindergarten, according to state and local educators. And when you regard local concerns and local control, I think this addresses that. Thank you, sir.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Howard. Senator Smith.

SENATOR SMITH: Thank you, Mr. President and members. As I gather the information here, it's interesting (laugh) to really narrow it down to what this is, and this is removal of local control, because the state has been funding it for quite some time now, funding all-day kindergarten, that is. And so what we have here is just merely shifting everyone--unless we have the amendment, and then the parochial schools are exempt--but shifting everyone to all-day kindergarten, and so even if the patrons of the local school district would not want all-day kindergarten, the state still says you must offer all-day kindergarten because. And we need to be careful here what we're asking for. And that's why I think we should, perhaps, adopt the amendment, but certainly reject the mandate on the full face of LB 228. When we talk about trying to be efficient and resourceful with limited resources...and I do want to emphasize the fact that we do have limited resources when it comes to dollars available. I know that times have been a little better in terms of revenue. We ought not adopt mandates like this, however, that will just use up those funds and basically force someone to spend money even if they would choose not to. Even