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followed by Senator Janssen.

SENATOR COMBS: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body. This morning I think I was like one of the second or third speakers. I haven't spoken since then, but I've certainly been doing a lot of working and thinking on and off the floor. I talked a little bit about, you know, being like the baby that's brought to Solomon, to divide up. Well, I'm kind of still waiting for the real mother to show up. She really hasn't shown up totally in my mind yet, but I think I'm getting closer. I did want to address, though, the comments made regarding the rural senators' vote. The rural senators have some collateral that are to me--I call them...they're my black chips. And if you're a poker player, you got black chips, you got red chips, and you got some green that are kind of like in-between. But we've got some collateral that we must use wisely. And sure, this amendment, I'm for it. Why? Because when I looked at it, there were five of my schools this morning that it would help. My friend, Senator Bourne there, is making some faces, but it does. In all seriousness, it does help my people. Why am I here? I'm here to serve my people. I represent rural school districts. I'm for this amendment. Why? Because it helps begin to right the wrong that is in the current funding formula. The current funding formula was developed ten years ago with very different demographics. We have evolving demographics right now in the rural areas that have caused many levy overrides. Now hopefully the next two years, four years, we're going to revisit that funding formula which is still...has languished in committee the past two years. This is a step in that direction to kind of righting that, and we have to use our collateral wisely. So rather than saying that rural people are selling out, rural people have some collateral that they can spend on an issue that to me makes some sense. I know that the children, as I said this morning, that's my main thought, the children that are going to benefit. I look in this amendment and I see this special needs student provision there. It's on page 18, sub (5). And there's some formula adjustments in there that are being made. It's a switch that will help some small schools that maybe don't have enough limited English proficiency students. It's going to bump them up. That will help them. Again, it helps rural schools. We have a lot going on in this