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FLOOR DEBATE

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SENATOR KOPPLIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the body. This amendment was worked on considerably the last day of debate. We spent a lot of time, we spent a lot of negotiations, a lot of hard work was done. I am going to talk about it for a little bit for a couple of reasons. This bill has been a very complex thing from the very beginning. I did my best in opposing this bill. I have as good as understanding of what's in this bill as anybody on this legislative floor. I have a background in school finance and school procedures, and I've got to tell you, I still don't understand everything. Senator Raikes has assured us that we have two years to work out the details and we can fix it. You know, Senator Raikes, I bought a car that way once. (Laughter) But you're more trustworthy. I have a great deal of respect for Senator Raikes. On the last time we debated this bill, I opposed it completely during the day into the evening. I made one yes vote on this bill. One yes vote and that was to go to Final Reading after there was already a big majority of people that had voted to move it on. For that, my staff, myself, my family heard from a great many people in not kind ways. I was called a name that I don't even use--my people in my own community. It angered me, angered me because I spent this whole session working on this bill, trying to make it decent for people. And people who have not read a single word, people from my own county, from my community dare to tell me that I have no respect for minorities, no respect for poor people. I don't tell many people this. I was a child of welfare. I'm angry that you would say I don't understand poor people. Oh, yes, I do. I understand their feelings. I understand the tremendous load they bear, the loss of hope. Don't tell me that I don't support poor people. Okay, that being said, I'm going to try to get back in control here. My apologies. This is a very difficult bill to understand but it can be understood. My amendment would stop the procedure and would say we're going to form a task force of the school people involved and a larger number of other people because the school people cannot sit down together and work this out. Professionally, that's what they should have done a long time ago. But this amendment would stop the procedures, have a task force to report back to us. Unfortunately, it's anticlimactic. I think people have made up their minds. We can do the same