

us were supporting it with the understanding that the price tag out there in the future would be in the 100 to \$120 million range. And now because of the change in language we understand it might be more than that. But let me emphasize what my intent was in supporting the DeCamp amendment at the time and is now in supporting the bill, and that is that that 45 percent language is a goal. It is a goal that we would like to reach if funds are available sometime in the future. It is not an ironclad commitment by any means. It is not a promise on behalf of the proponents of LB 662 that they will necessarily support funding at that level in the future. It is very much in the nature of authorization language in the Congress. You know, when the Congress passes money spending bills, first funds are authorized and then weeks or months or even years later funds will actually be appropriated and the appropriations may fall in some instances short of the authorizations of the goals. And I think what we mean in the DeCamp amendment in Section 17 is to authorize expenditures of that extent to be setting out a goal. But the only actual commitment in LB 662 that any of us are making, either this year or in future years, is the approximately \$90 million that will be raised by increasing the sales tax one cent. And I think it is appropriate to do that and I think a majority of the people in the Legislature feel it is appropriate to do that. We have been talking tax relief measures for years now and we have had presented this session three different alternatives at least for property tax relief by way of increasing the sales tax one penny. And I think a number of us as these bills have been debated in committee and on the floor have come to the conclusion that the most appropriate way of offering property tax relief by increasing the sales tax one cent is through the tried and true, the method that we have used for many, many years, that we have had a considerable amount of experience with, that also benefits public education in this state and that is through the state aid formula. So I think we are making a significant commitment in LB 662 in deciding to raise that sales tax and put the funds through the state aid to education formula, with that increase to go in approximately a year and a half from now. I think it is a responsible thing to do and I want to make it clear that for my part at least we are making no promises, no guarantees, no assurances of any kind that we will necessarily fund it beyond that. I think, as Senator Beutler indicates, we need to wait and see. We need to maintain a flexibility and that is one of the truly good