

SENATOR MAURSTAD: Well, we probably don't have time, so let me just...I'll just restate one of my concerns relative to the...I would like to give the local school districts flexibility and make sure that we are, in fact, doing that. And so I want to make sure that we coordinate in 742 that we provide flexibility without placing too heavy of a hand of the state on the shoulders of the school districts and making this work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Thank you, Senator Maurstad. Would like to recognize groups of students in the north balcony. First of all, from one of the two finest communities in the State of Nebraska, we have from LaVista, from G. Stanley Hall Elementary School, 75 students and their instructor. And we also have from District 10, Columbus, Nebraska, 25 eighth graders from Senator Robak's district, and their instructor. Welcome to all of you. Glad to have you here. Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Withem, members of the Legislature, I just wanted to state briefly why...why I support this bill very strongly and why I think people who are interested in children with disabilities and helping children with disabilities should support this bill very strongly. I believe, very clearly, that things go in historical...very strongly that things go in historical cycles and we try to do things for the good of people and certain groups of people and then we go a ways in that effort and usually it costs some money. And then there's a backlash and when that backlash comes you've got to stand up and tell people why you're spending money, why it's a good thing, and you've got to be able to look them in the eye and saying...and say to them, we're doing it in the smartest, wisest way it can be done and it's worth doing. Periodically, all of the programs that we have go through these phases whenever it comes to the point in time when the property taxpayers are in revolt with respect to local matters, or when there's revolt against the sales and income tax. And if you're willing to continue that support, or if you want additional support, if you believe in those things, you're not going to be able to convince the public to do that unless you can first convince them that you've looked at the programs that are costing so much money, that you've looked at the welfare program, that you've looked at the disabilities education programs and they're solid. They're good. We've looked at everything. We laid everything on the table. We were critical of everything and we can say they're