

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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FLOOR DEBATE

January 24, 2001 LB 313

CLERK: 31 ayes, 0 nays, Mr. President on adoption of committee amendments.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Committee amendments are adopted. Debate on the advancement of LB 313. Senator Vrtiska.

SENATOR VRTISKA: Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor. Members of the body, I rise in support of this particular piece of legislation. I think that it's especially important to understand that a great many schools who had discussed this proposition and talked about it at length and somehow had never reached a conclusion whether they wanted to go ahead, are now at the point where he's basically going to jerk the rug out and say, well, he's too late. And as I thought about this, I thought about some of the merchandisers who hold sales, and they say it lasts until Saturday, then come Saturday they say, well, we're going to extend this on until next Saturday. And that's kind of what's happening here. And I think what we're saying is that we see a great many schools who are now in the discussion stage. And if you come from a small school, like I do, you understand it's a difficult situation that takes a lot of people involved in order to encourage what actually should be done and the problems that arise in this process. And I was interested because when you do these kind of unifications that eventually will allude...lead to consolidation, there are those expenses that a lot of people don't understand or realize until it takes place. My community is involved in unification at the present time with the idea of consolidating. And, I guess, I look at this as an opportunity perhaps for maybe one more school to come into the mix, which will make it even more important. I know there are a lot of senators on the floor who would like to see the number of school districts cut down, and there are lot of school districts who reach the stage in this...events have developed where they probably can't continue to exist the way our system is set up. So I certainly would encourage you to support this piece of legislation and hold that carrot out there for those districts who are in the throes of trying to make up their mind whether they in fact this is the right thing to do. And many of them know it's the right thing to do, but they need some incentive, and this is what actually does that. And I