

that it would offer the possibility of cost savings to the County. The average, in terms of mill levy cost of the County Superintendent's office around the state now, is in the neighborhood of .25 mills. Here we are specifying a maximum of .1 mill and I have letters from all kinds of ESU administrators who say that they can do it for this, this price. Many of them say they can do it for quite a bit less. So, we are offering a tax saving. One of the advantages of this bill is that with the County Superintendents around the states now, we are reaching a point in time where many of them are at or beyond retirement age. The median age of all County Superintendents in the state is 65. This means that a lot of them are going to be retiring. This bill would give us the flexibility to make the change at the point when they are going to be retiring instead of waiting until a new generation of County Superintendents have been elected and then, at some point later on, we would reach a situation where there are no Class I school districts left or so few we can't justify the office, and then we would have to take the office away from a younger person who would like to continue the office. So, I think that this would be a very natural way to phase out the office in areas where the Class I district number has been reduced to a very low level. Again, I emphasize it is permissive. It does not require any change where a county in evaluating its situation recognizes the need for continuation of the present situation. So, I move the advancement of LB 402.

SPEAKER: Senator Keyes.

SENATOR KEYES: Was he closing?

SPEAKER: No, he was not closing.

SENATOR KEYES: Well, Senator Anderson, I want to commend you on doing one thing that should have been done many years ago. And the one thing that you didn't stress is that the qualifications for a County Superintendent are such that for \$6,000 in Sarpy County the man that is going to take that job with his qualifications, education, certainly is not going to be a young and aggressive man. The qualifications are such that you could be a superintendent of any school and so I would urge you to go ahead and pass this as entirely permissive. It will certainly leave a way out for my county who has a Superintendent. They pay him, I think, \$6,000 a year with the degree he is required to have to hold that office, and he only has two schools and one of them is open and one of them is shut, and he has less than 22 pupils to report on. It is rather high priced for 22 pupils.

SPEAKER: Senator Hasebroock and then Senator Nore.

SENATOR HASEBROOCK: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I'd like to direct a question to Senator Anderson. I might make just a few remarks. In my district we still have a County Superintendents in all three counties, and there has been some apprehension by the citizens in the county as to the phasing out of the school districts, but as I have been listening to the bill, it looks like it is going to be pretty much permissive. Did I understand you right? They must hold a hearing, Senator Anderson, before and twelve months before they can make any decision.

SENATOR ANDERSON: Yes. that is correct. The decision would have to be made...in terms of making the decision at least 12 months before the end of the term of office would mean that the decision would have to be made this fall or certainly not later than the end of December, so, but the hearing must be held. That is part of the bill.

SENATOR HASEBROOCK: Could I direct another question to Senator Anderson, if Senator Anderson would yield.