

February 28, 1974

SENATOR ANDERSON: Mr. President and members of the Legislature. I'm in very much the same position as Senator Lewis over here and this is in not understanding specifically what is happening but in being able to read dollars and cents. And I think if anybody here has sit down and attempted to study the figures that are in the printouts that we've been given just recently or the printouts we had last year, it becomes very obvious that the people that are being short-changed in terms of aid to education are the very people who started the big pressure for it. And these are the people in the rural area who are paying so much property tax on land they have to have in order to earn their income. Now, I'm not sure in the figures I see I have any number of school districts that if we're talking about going to 45% to 50% state aid, I have any number of school districts that are ending up with 20% to 25% state aid. And, of course, that presumes that they are that much richer than school districts that are getting 50% or more. And I can say absolutely and I think with quite a bit of assurance that that is not true. That just because they're getting less state aid doesn't mean that they are in fact richer districts, that the people have greater income. Now, in terms of the amendment that is proposed right here, I think I detect a difference of opinion as to how Senator Whitney's amendment would affect these small school districts. And I wonder if I could ask Senator Whitney and Senator Warner if both of them would give us their opinion as to how Senator Whitney's amendment specifically affects these school districts that have predominantly agriculture tax-paying situation, the smaller school districts, the ones with farm area. Which one is going to come out better in terms of Senator Whitney's amendment so if both of you would comment on that, I would appreciate it.

PRESIDENT: Senator Whitney.

SENATOR WHITNEY: Yes, I would like to comment on that. For the real small school, rural schools, Class 1 schools, that have all agricultural land in it, it probably won't help them out a bit. But for the small town schools with some agricultural land in it or say considerable, it'll help them out some. And obviously it will change the distribution a little bit. But in other words, instead of say some the small town schools maybe getting 20-25-30% of their operational costs, they may get an extra 5% whereas some schools that get let us say 60-70%, it may pull them down to 58%....to 65% or something like that. So what it's doing here is to tend to equalize a greater extent the amount going to all the schools. Now, if we don't do this, it just simply means that some schools are going to get a great number of dollars more per pupil than other schools are. It still is going to happen if this amendment of mine goes through, it's still going to be that way. Some schools will still get a great deal more per pupil than other schools will and I just think this will help the situation a little bit. It'll still be a bad formula, a bad situation but it will help it out a little and we should compromise further than this but this is just trying to help the bill out a little bit with reference to those small town schools that have considerable amount of farm land in them.

PRESIDENT: Senator Maresh.

SENATOR MARESH: Mr. President and members of the Legislature. I rise to support the Whitney amendment. I feel that we should compromise just as Senator Carpenter said and I'm willing to compromise on this if we can get something that will help my area. LB472 last year gave me an average of about 20% in state aid and I could not support this and the bill