

SENATOR BARRETT: Senator Beutler, then Senator Vickers.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, I wanted to give you the background on how the Executive Board approached this particular problem. I want to say at the beginning that I don't believe this to be a David and Goliath situation. Certainly the Nebraska School Improvement Association, on the side of the Class I school districts, has been the predominant force in this whole battle for years, and years, and years, nor is it a matter of a power play. It is a matter of trying to accommodate all of the competing interest in the Legislature. The Exec Board made that effort to compromise. Let me give you the history of what happened in the Executive Board. The Revenue Committee...the Chairman of the Revenue Committee wanted the bill. The Chairman of the Education Committee said, fine, send it over to the Revenue Committee. Now in many, many cases in referencing when both chairmen agree on a particular referencing that is usually the end of it. But not on this particular issue because Senator Lamb was not satisfied with that. Okay, so the next thing that we did was to try to figure out some way of accommodating the situation. The first vote in the Executive Board meeting was for it to go to Education. The vote failed. The next vote in the Executive Board was for it to go to Revenue, and that failed. Then there was a third vote. A compromise was suggested whereby one bill would go to Revenue and the other bill would go to Education. That vote failed also. So at that point in time we held up and tried to...and put off the meeting to figure out what to do next with it. Okay, at that point in time Senator Chambers was missing. There were four votes to send it to Revenue. We could have just waited for Senator Chambers and sent it to Revenue, and that would have been it. But we tried to come up with another solution that would accommodate the traditional sending of the bill to Education, and at the same time acknowledge the interest and the tax equity issues by involving the Executive Board also in the situation. After that meeting I met with the chairmen, Senator Vickers and Senator Johnson, and they both agreed to the compromise of sending it to Education and the Exec Board. In fact I think a majority of the Education Committee, I haven't had time to poll the Revenue Committee, but the majority of the Education Committee is in favor of this. So both committee chairmen, the majority of the Education Committee, the vote on the Exec Committee itself was 7 to 1 to do the referencing in this manner, so it