

We had a system of law that tried to address unfair treatment one time. We did it in the civil rights area. We labored for years under the notion that separate but equal was fair. It is not. We've shown historically it is not, and it is not in this case. You can't buy out the fact that we have two sets of tax obligations, one for people that support education K thru 12, one for people that support education K thru 8, plus the user fee of the high school tuition. The high school tuition has run onto hard times. Who fights it? The Class I people. They fight it because they want, number one, legislative descriptions of what it should be; and, secondly, when they do get a legislative description they attack it because they think it is unfair. And when we stay wedded to that system we will always have, at the heart of it, a difference in how we treat people and what we expect them to do with respect to the support of education. We say that some people have to own, buy, maintain and run high schools, and other people don't have to buy, run and own them, they just get to rent them for a little while while their kids are going to school, or the neighbor kids are going to school. When the population goes down their taxes go down. When the school populations elsewhere go down, because you own that building, you keep it open and you run it, and it is costly. Therein lies the difference. Until everyone is in the same boat, property tax relief is a good goal. I'm for it. I'm voting for it and I'm working for it, but it doesn't undo the basic unfairness of treating people into two classes and moving those classes and creating separate tax obligations for each. That is unfair. You can't buy your way out of it and maintain a sort of separate but equal thinking because we know that you can't do that over time and really be equal.

PRESIDENT: Chair recognizes Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, I would also like to speak against the amendment. If, in fact, you are against 662, then you should just vote against 662. You should not vote for this amendment because when you vote for an amendment like that eventually the people are going to realize that you did not face the issue, that you voted for a nonsolution. Let me talk philosophy first, and then let me talk about why this is a nonsolution in a technical sense. First of all, as a matter of philosophy, the only thing that is being done here is the very simple thing of saying, once again as we've heard so many times