

I indicated to you that my opposition to this particular bill had to do exclusively with the \$3 million price tag. I think, essentially, that getting into heavy investments in vocational education at the secondary school level is simply not the appropriate policy for this particular...for the state to adopt. First of all, I think that with regard to all our children, at the primary level and at the high school level, that the important thing is to get back to the basics, to get back to the fundamental courses and teach those well, and those courses don't cost more money. We need to do better the things that don't cost more money rather than spending money on things that are not as helpful, generally speaking, to high school level and grade school level kids. It seems to me that what we are doing is going back more to the European system. You know with the European system they decide at a very early age whether a kid is bound for glory, or whether he is bound for some simple kind of job in society. I think the European system is a great mistake. I think we do much better here in America because we recognize the fact that kids bloom late sometimes, sometimes simply because they develop intellectually slower, sometimes and most of the time perhaps because their attitude changes for one reason or another, and at a certain point in time they may well catch fire and a student who hasn't done diddly for 12 years may all of a sudden discover that he is the intellectual giant of his class. It is a mistake to start classifying kids early or setting into place systems that allow kids to classify themselves early. I don't think, for that reason, that large scale investment in vocational education at that particular level is a wise public policy decision. I think that vocational education is important, but there are two ways we should be going I think instead of the way it is being suggested by this bill. One way, essentially, is what we are doing with the voc-tech colleges. Every student who graduates from a high school has the opportunity to go to a vocational education college, and to get vocational education in a training situation, both where it can be done well and where it can be done least expensively. I suggest to you that if you really think about it with 300 and some high school districts in this state, many of whom only have 30, 40, 50 high school students, there is no way that this state is going to make a comprehensive vocational education program in all of those schools without an expenditure of funds that is far beyond the ability of this Legislature to appropriate. What I am saying to you is that structurally