

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Vickers, please.

SENATOR VICKERS: Mr. President, members, I rise to oppose the Remmers amendment. Senator Remmers talks about justice. The statute right now says that when a student attends an elementary school in his or her own district, now remember, this will be in their own district if the attendance center is closed, if a merger takes place, and lives more than four miles from a public school house therein, there shall be paid 285 percent of the mileage rate provided in Section 84.306-03 for each mile actually necessary to travel on each day of attendance and so forth. Now what that means is and what Senator Remmers is saying is if you have got an attendance center that is 15 miles away from your school, from the other school house, and the number of students at that attendance center get down to only one, that the attendance center is then closed, then under the Remmers amendment, you would say to the school district, you buy a bus and drive out there that fifteen miles for that one student. You don't pay the parents the 60 cents a mile for transportation. Now that is what Senator Remmers' amendment is saying. Now I do not think it is wise for us to tell school districts, you shall provide the bus. We say to them right now in the law, you shall provide transportation over a certain mileage limit, that mileage limit being four miles, but we leave it up to the school district to determine whether or not they actually buy a bus or send a bus out after each child regardless of where they may be or whether they pay the parents for transporting the child. Now Senator Remmers says it is an inconvenience to parents and, yeah, that is true. I am a parent myself. We lived out in the country but I can tell Senator Remmers that that school bus that the school board is going to have to buy, and Senator Remmers understands schools and I thought he was for local control and letting the school boards make their own decisions, but in this instance this is not what you would be doing. Once that child is about in the 7th grade, those parents are going to be driving their kid to school anyhow even if the school is providing a bus. And do you know why? Because the bus is going to leave the school house right after school is out. Now if school gets out at three-thirty today, what happens in most of the school districts in this state? Track practice starts and most students want to stay and go to track practice. How well I know. That means that they are not going to want to ride