

providing for a better education system through the passage of 662 than we have today? I am not sure that I have an answer for that, I am not sure anybody does, but I am concerned about the welfare of our rural schools in this state and I think that at this point the school financing provision seems to have a bigger play in the passage of this bill than actually the school consolidation issue. However, school consolidation will be right along with this issue and Senator Lamb has already pointed out to us the fact that there is probably a very good chance that it is unconstitutional for those people to continue to vote to keep that school open. That bothers me again. So I just pose the question to you, will we have a better system after the passage of 662 than we do today? Thank you.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Schmit, then Senator Landis. May I introduce some guests of Senator Lynch. In the north balcony are 14 fourth through sixth grade students from Word Outreach School in Omaha with their teacher. Would you please stand and be recognized. Thank you for visiting the Legislature this morning. Senator Landis. The question has been called, do I see five hands? I do. The question is, shall debate cease? All those in favor vote aye, opposed no. We are voting to cease debate. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 13 aye, 14 nays to cease debate, Mr. President.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Debate has not ceased. Senator Chambers, then Senator Beutler. Senator Schmit, I passed you up, did you wish to talk? Okay, Senator Beutler. Okay, Senator Scofield, then Senator DeCamp.

SENATOR SCOFIELD: Mr. Speaker, members, I don't think it will come as any surprise to you that I once again rise to oppose this bill. I believe we have some questions out there that need to be addressed. I'll give them that. It's true, we have tax issues in this state that need to be addressed. 662 does not do that and in the process what it does is essentially uproot a system that has served the rural areas of our state pretty well. I did a research project a few years ago on the history of rural schools and frankly did not go into that with any particular positive view of rural schools because I did never go to one and I carried the same biases toward rural schools that I'm sure many people do. When I got out there and actually looked around and saw what was going on I was surprised at the