

PRESIDENT: Is there an objection? Senator Abboud. If not, so ordered.

SENATOR VICKERS: Okay, Amendment 2505 is laying on your desk. The amendment is the reason that this bill was passed over a few days ago, one of the reasons, because we did have some confusion about the other amendment, and what this is is an attempt on my part and Senator Baack's part and a few other people's parts to separate the issues of the ESU study from the issue of the opt out provision which Senator Hartnett will be discussing with you a little bit later with his amendment. There is a system of Educational Service Units in place in most areas of the state and the Education Committee has been struggling over the last several years with a couple of three questions. First, exactly what services should be provided by those Educational Service Units? Secondly, how should they be funded? What should the funding mechanism be? And, thirdly, where should the boundaries of those Educational Service Units be? Fourthly, what should the governing structure of those Educational Service Units be? And what is the future in terms of the role and mission of those Educational Service Units? The question, as generally broken down, and we have had an interim study even last summer chaired by Senator Lamb on some of those very issues, but in the end, the question breaks down as to the difficulties trying to provide a service from a single system to unlike school districts. The large school districts come to the committee saying we do not need some of these services, we do not think the funding mechanism is fair, therefore, we have the smaller school districts who, obviously, need the services, need more services, so it became apparent that we needed some mechanism to try to resolve this particular issue. The Education Committee advanced LB 1062, which I am sure you have probably heard about through some letters or some phone calls to, create a study mechanism so that through some sort of a task force mechanism we could have some resolution of this particular problem. In 1062 we also put in a provision saying that any school district could opt out after a certain period of time and, of course, that, I will be very blunt about it, was put in by the committee in an effort to provide some sort of a club, if you will, to force the varying competing forces to sit down together and to work through this problem. Now, I think that that attention has been achieved. We have got the attention of a lot of folks