

very popular thing.

SENATOR CARSTEN: One minute.

SENATOR SCHMIT: But I think it is the realistic thing to do and I would encourage you to support the Hartnett amendment.

SENATOR CARSTEN: Thank you, Senator Schmit. Senator Lamb, please.

SENATOR LAMB: Mr. President and members, I would just like to relate the thinking of the committee, the Education Committee, in regard to this issue. Now, as you may know, the Education Committee linked the study with Senator Hartnett's amendment in a bill, and, as Senator Vickers explained, it is a hammer so that if this study is not productive, then the bill would go into effect which would allow districts to opt out. That was the committee's thinking at the time, that let's link those things together. So while I have mixed emotions about Senator Hartnett's amendment, it is not all that bad, primarily because the effective date is after the study. So we, in effect, do have a hammer there which we very well may need, and the statutes certainly can be changed if you don't want to allow them to opt out. Now, there was another bill lying there which would allow ESUs only 1 cent instead of a 3 1/2 cent taxing authority, only 1 cent for administrative purposes and then this would force the ESUs to be responsive to the wishes of the school districts, so most of their money would come from contracting with the school districts. I think that was the way we should have gone and we maybe still should go that way to allow ESUs a minimal amount of tax money but make most of their money come from what they produce. If they can't sell their services to a school district, then they are going to have problems. The way it is now they can rely on a tax levy whether or not they are performing the services that the school districts want. So at this point I am inclined to support Senator Hartnett's amendment merely because that was the thinking of the committee that we did need some sort of a hammer. But many states have this other situation where property tax levy is very much limited as far as ESUs are concerned. I think we need to look at that in the future.

SENATOR CARSTEN: Thank you, Senator. Senator Chronister, please.