

SENATOR MOREHEAD: All right, that's fine. Thank you. This simply allows them to opt out. Now, I'm not saying that Senator Hartnett isn't doing a good job of representing his area where he has large school districts who have large facilities and probably give these services on their own to their clients. But like Senator Rod Johnson said, give the Education Committee an opportunity to study this whole issue. I can appreciate what Senator Schmit is saying. Now, I happen to be able to name the directors and the people in my area. I happen to know where the ESU is, but I also know that some of the small school districts out there in my area could not function and meet the requirements of the special education programs, for instance, the speech rehabilitation programs. They don't have the money to do that within their own staffs without the existence of that ESU. Now, Senator Lamb has some counties and some school districts that aren't even in an ESU and many people think every school district and county should be a participant. There are many, many different philosophies and it does need a close look, but like Senator Rod Johnson pointed out, let's not make a decision ahead of the look, ahead of the study. If this comes from the study and is a viable option, then we can adopt it, but let's give us a chance to look at it before we lock into statute something which prevents that. So, I, unfortunately have to stand and oppose Senator Hartnett's amendment in this particular case, but I would admonish you to do the same thing because I think you're making a determination before the study, so please defeat Senator Hartnett's amendment.

PRESIDENT: Senator Eret. The speaking order after Senator Eret is Senators Nelson, Rupp, Schmit, Remmers and Hoagland.

SENATOR ERET: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I rise to oppose the Hartnett amendment. I, initially, did not support the bringing of ESUs into LB 994 that we had before us, however, that was what was done. The ESUs were brought in under the direction of the Department of Education. We have followed that up then with a bill this year that has resulted now in placing the ESUs, or forming a commission to study and standardize the use of the ESUs statewide. As far as using the club, I think the club has been used and laid aside. That was the initial language that Senator Hartnett is bringing back to us again now. That was to catch the people's attention, that using language to let the districts to opt out, but out of that bill when we laid aside that portion of it and firmed up the study commission, that is a point at which I, as a member of the