

other terrible thing that you can think of. Well, all I can tell you is that from my humble perspective, and from what little I know about this issue, all the things that you are hearing are pure poppycock. I wear tall boots and they are not tall enough to walk through that mess that they are spreading around. The fact is, ladies and gentlemen, we are not cutting one dime from special education. The fact is, ladies and gentlemen, when they tell you that we are going to have a system where they move students from one side of a line to another and, therefore, they are not going to get the services or, conversely, it is going to cost you more, these are the same people, ladies and gentlemen, that have been telling the Education Committee and me for the last eight years that, no, we don't move students back and forth across a line to get dollars. We don't move students back and forth across a line to provide services that possibly they don't need. Now, it seems rather strange to me that this same group of people can tell you on the one hand we don't move them across this line, and then you draw another line over here, and then all of a sudden they are telling you we can move them back and forth across that line at will. That is not true. Now, I recognize that several of you are going to have to vote no because of the political pressures that have been brought to bear and I understand that. I recognize that several of you are going to have to vote no because of the concerns about labeling people in different fashions and I understand that. Let me tell you how well I understand that. There is a certain label that is applied to people when they drop out of school, and sometimes that label is hard to overcome. I know about labels, ladies and gentlemen, but I can tell you that unless you begin to address this problem, and I am leaving this place, you can work with it next year if you would like. You can wait until they come in and tell you this is what we support, if you like, but if you do, you are not going to solve the problem because a lot of people don't even know what the problem is. The problem, ladies and gentlemen, is very simple. The problem is we are treating a special group of youngsters in a special way that need that treatment and, by the way, special education should apply to both ends of that spectrum. It should apply to the gifted as well. But what we are also forgetting occasionally is that large group of young people that I don't know whether labels are appropriate or not but you can call them normal, you can call them average, you can call them what ever you want to, but they fit in the middle somewhere, and because of the economic conditions that you people are going to be dealing with for the foreseeable future, these average, these normal, these regular