

together here. We have schools that teach our young people how to play golf. We have schools that teach us how to go bowling. Let's get our priorities together here. What's more important than driving? Let's vote for this bill and advance it. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Cudaback. Senator Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, my original intent on LB 336 was to sit quietly, listen to the debate, make a decision on the merits of the bill as the debate went along. Unfortunately, I guess what I'm beginning to see in LB 336 is somewhat as Senator Bernard-Stevens had indicated. He talked about a left door, backhanded, or a back door, left-handed approach, I forget which of those two terms he used to force driver's education back into the schools. And as I begin to read some of the amendments that are to be following this motion, begin to get concerned with that because we have one by Senator Robak and, as I read Senator Robak's amendment, it basically says we will offer driver's education in the schools and it looks like we're going to be funding it from the Tax Equity in the Education Opportunities Fund which I believe is the 1059 money. Senator Moore has a bill up mandating the local school districts, an amendment up, saying that local school districts will be forced to offer driver's education if this bill...if his amendment were to be adopted and another one saying we'll reinstitute state funding for driver's education. What that gets me thinking is that really what this bill is about, it really isn't about individuals getting their driver's license. It's about the state mandating a curricular decision back onto the local school districts through the back door, the left-handed approach, as Senator Bernard-Stevens had mentioned. Remind you that in Nebraska we are a local control state when it comes to school curriculum. We have not, to this extent, we don't even mandate in state statute, we don't even mandate the local school district teach math. We don't even mandate that they teach science. We don't even mandate that they teach English. All we mandate in state statutes is that they have a health program and that they have an Americanism program. Senator Bernard-Stevens was 100 percent right in what happened when the state, during the budget crunch of the mid-1980s, pulled the funding out of driver's education and that was that local school districts looked at their priorities and they made decisions. They either went to a private pay program, they kept driver's education or they got rid of it and for the state to