

we're going to mandate something that we know is going to cause a cost for the public schools, is it important enough of a priority to take from other programs? We, in the Legislature, say it's not important for us to fund. I assume we would take the same attitude with the...with the bill itself. I would urge the body not to pass the bill. There are more important things for schools to be doing. This is not one of them.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Bernard-Stevens. Mr. Clerk, an amendment on the desk.

ASSISTANT CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Beutler would move to amend. Senator, would you like me to read it?

SENATOR BEUTLER: Please.

ASSISTANT CLERK: (Read the Beutler amendment, FA231, as found on page 386 of the Legislative Journal.)

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, I, for myself, I think there are a lot of good aspects to this bill. Everybody does drive. Kids do need to learn how to drive. I think driver's education is important. I do think the schools are a natural vehicle for doing this that they seem to have the institutions in place, they can put together the resources to get the job done. But the one thing that has stuck in my craw, and this is going to be a debate on a broader scale, I assure you, next year, but is this whole business of the dilution of core curriculum. We have schools out there that don't teach languages, where you can't get calculus, where you can't even get good advanced math courses, and what we're doing, in effect, if not as a legal mandate, what we're doing, in effect, here is saying we're going to make a lot more kids take driver's education. I mean, that's going to be the result of this, we all know that. And when we do that and if that course is for credit, it's going to siphon off a lot more kids, in my opinion, away from core curriculum and, you know, it's one more core curriculum course or a more important course that's probably not going to get taught and the kids will take the driver's education course. Well, I don't want that to happen if that means that the basic curriculum or what, in my opinion at least, is the more important curriculum in the school is going to be diluted by that process. And so all my amendment does is