

statements of assurance is basically a checklist, where a school district say, yes, I am teaching; we are doing 60 hours of math, or we are doing 40 units of English. They do the checklist, send it into the Department of Education, and the Department, then, takes that, goes out on an audit, and then actually goes out and see...sees for themselves are they doing what they assured the department they were doing, and this would go into that flow. Senator Withem commented, I think, on the negative side of this. On the negative side, it will be seven years before all school districts have been audited. So some school districts that were audited, for example, last year, will not come up for audit for seven years. That is the negative side of this particular amendment. The Department of Education has mentioned to me that what they will do to try to speed that up is, if this bill is passed, and I certainly hope it is, that they would begin 25 to 50 extra districts a year, auditing them specifically on the multicultural. And I assume that that is going to be those areas, those school districts that would fall in the latter part of the accreditation program or the fifth, sixth, and seventh year. So this amendment would simply say that every year, true, they would still have to submit an annual report. Every year the Department of Education would be auditing specifically for the multicultural process, and it would be included in the actual auditing of the curriculum within the accreditation program, which is already in place. And, again, what it would do is that when the school district is audited, and it is their time to be audited, they will, then, have to show that what they are saying they are doing actually is occurring, or as Senator Chambers wants and the Legislature, I believe, wants, their accreditation would not be approved. A very strong hammer but it sets into the process of how we do all things of major importance of education to make sure that it is done. That is the nature of the amendment. The policy decision is before the body, and I put it before the body in good faith, certainly to Senator Chambers. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Bernard-Stevens. Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Madam President, members of the Legislature, and Senator Bernard-Stevens, I take you at your word that you are not trying to harm the bill, weaken it, or slow it down in any way, and that you do want to see it pass, and I am even more persuaded of that in view of the example that you gave that happened very recently in North Platte. I have talked to other