

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, I would. And we're under call, are we?

SPEAKER BAACK: We are on Final Reading.

SENATOR WITHEM: On Final Reading. Could I ask for people to check in while I'm closing and then we can begin that process to save time?

SPEAKER BAACK: Would the senators please check in. You may begin, Senator Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM: Thank you, Senator Baack. I have very little to say in closing, other than to indicate that what this amendment does is two very important policy considerations, policy consideration one being the in-lieu-of tax issue does need to get done. The Department of Education is operating under an interpretation from an Attorney General's Opinion indicating that their money cannot be distributed. It...keep in mind this money is normally distributed in February. It has not been. A number of school districts are experiencing cash flow. In terms of the E clause issue that Senator Wickersham raised that we have been through this before when people are in objection to one portion of the bill but the other part has to pass, we usually vote first on whether a bill should pass with the emergency clause and if it doesn't, we vote to pass it without, then we move to reconsider and people then are put in a position where we have a bill that they didn't like but part of it has to go into effect immediately and usually that gets done. That's usually not a problem, the need to get an emergency clause. Even if it is, it would delay distribution of this money another three months. That would not be the end of the world as long as we have a method in place to distribute it. The portion of the amendment that's taken the most controversy and the most time is the Class VI common levy. We seem to have a reiteration of the same old arguments. I've stood on the floor and counted them. I think Senator Baack made a point in the closing on the motion to return that there have been a lot of arguments procedurally why people didn't like what we were doing, but there are very few factual arguments as to why you have one system of supporting K-12 education for freestanding Class Is and an entirely different, more favorable system to some of them for supporting other...another K-12 system. I would remind the body, in case some of you weren't in here about what I had suggested. I didn't...I noticed I didn't get much of