

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Withem, members of the Legislature, I just wanted to speak quickly against the Chambers amendment and against Senator Schimek's amendment and to remind you that the language in the amendment now forces nothing but encourages, hopefully, some good things. It says that the cash assistance provided to the recipient family may, may be reduced when the parent or parents have failed to take reasonable action to encourage the minor children of the recipient family, age 16 and under, to regularly attend school. All we're asking them to do is what we're asking all other parents to do and that is to abide by the mandatory compulsory school age law, to make every effort to abide by that. I don't see how that is a radical insertion of societal values on the individual. It is an assertion of values but it is an assertion of values that, hopefully, we all agree upon, and it is an assertion of values that is not protected by the Constitution. We're not impinging on constitutional values here. This is something that long ago in our history the courts have decided is a value that can be imposed by the legislative body of the various states and in recognizing the importance of education we did that many, many years ago and we continued to strengthen it over the decades. And, hopefully, we will strengthen it some more because to compete in the world that we're dealing with we all know that more vocational skills, more educational skills are going to be required of us all in order to have a job in the world that's rapidly evolving. And so not to build into this system something that's encouraging of pointing the kids towards their only possible escape from poverty themselves, that is education, it would be an enormous mistake not to, I think, take advantage and...and continue to retain in the law the provision that has that effect. And I would join Senator Bromm in indicating that if the department in any way misuses this section, which I can't imagine that they would, we're always here to set the statutes and to further...to set the statutes straight, to further refine the statutes. Thank you.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Senator Rasmussen. The question has been called. Do I see five hands? I see five hands. All those in favor of closing debate indicate by voting aye, opposed vote nay. Have you all voted? Record.

CLERK: 25 ayes, 0 nays to cease debate, Mr. President.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Debate is ceased. Senator Chambers, to close.