

Chairperson and committee members:

My name is Joseph L. Bata from Adams, ND. I'm a member of the Walsh County School Reorganization Committee, and have been involved in school business for over 25 years. I'm chairman of the Walsh County Tax Equalization committee. I am an active farmer, landowner, and loyal taxpayer.

I'm writing in opposition to bill 2158. As the bill reads, a school district can give up to \$500,000 to a political subdivision, but it gives no use for the funds. The political subdivision can use the funds for anything they wish.

The bill should state the funds must be given to the political subdivision that receives the school district's assets in the dissolution. Remember these funds are school district funds and therefore should be designated for use of the school property. Without this statement in the law, the political subdivision (who knows what political subdivision gets it: township, county, firemen, city) can use it for anything.

I realize the bill is a single source bill written to make it legal for the Edmore School Board to give the city of Edmore a Half Million Dollars. As a tax payer in the district, these are land owner funds. These funds are tax payer dollars and STATE AID given to the school district for the Education of Children, not a political subdivision (city). The city of Edmore contributes only 6% to the annual income of the school district. My question then for the Committee is: are we to encourage other districts to build up funds to be given away to a political subdivision of their liking? Will schools that annex to another district try to change the law so they can give away up to a Half Million Dollars?

An amount of a \$100,000 ceiling would be a more appropriate revision of the bill. It gives the political subdivision more than adequate funds to establish the use of the school property. The Adams Auditorium is 18 miles from Edmore and in a town of the same population. It stays open for sports, exercising, and meetings and it never got a big hand- out.

The proposed bill should be amended to read:

The county committee may distribute the remaining unobligated cash not exceeding One Hundred Thousand Dollars to another political subdivision located partially or wholly within the geographic boundaries of the dissolving school district. The funds must be given to the political subdivision receiving the school assets and be designated for the use of the school property. After distributing the funds, the county committee shall distribute any remaining unobligated cash balance in accordance with subdivision a.

Thank you. I am available to answer any questions,

Joseph L. Bata