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PUBLIC HEARING
before
SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
SENATE BILL NO. 3125
(The "Education Reform Act of 1989")

February 7, 1989
Rosa B. Park School of
Fine and Performing Arts
Paterson, New Jersey

MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE PRESENT:

Senator Matthew Feldman, Chairman
Senator John H. Ewing
Senator Richard A. Zimmer

ALSO PRESENT:

Senator Ronald L. Rice
District 28

Deena R. Schorr
Office of Legislative Services
Aide, Senate Education Committee

* * * * *

Hearing Recorded and Transcribed by
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New Jersey State Legislature
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January 24, 1989

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

on

Senate Bill No. 3125
(sponsored by Senator Rice and Senator Feldman)

"The Education Reform Act of 1989".

The Senate Education Committee will hold public hearings as follows:

Tuesday, February 7, 1989
Beginning at 2:00 p.m.

Auditorium
Rosa Park School of
Fine and Performing Arts
East 27 St. & 12th Ave.
Paterson, New Jersey

Thursday, February 23, 1989
Beginning at 2:00 p.m.

Room 334
State House Annex
Trenton, New Jersey

An additional hearing will be scheduled in Camden, NJ. The date and time will be announced at a later date.

Anyone wishing to testify should contact Deena R. Schorr, aide to the committee at (609) 984-6843 and should submit copies of their testimony to the committee on the day of the hearing.



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SENATE, No. 3125

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED DECEMBER 19, 1988

By Senators RICE and FELDMAN

1 AN ACT concerning educational quality in the schools, and
supplementing Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

3

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the
5 State of New Jersey:

7 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Education
Reform Act of 1989."

9 2. The Legislature finds and determines that:

11 a. Despite the many reforms which have been discussed and
attempted, many of New Jersey's school districts still lack the
resources, programs, and planning to provide a truly thorough and
13 efficient education:

15 b. In order for those districts to provide the quality and
quantity of services to their pupils which are necessary to provide
equivalent and comparable educational programs to those offered
17 by districts which provide a truly thorough and efficient
education, a comprehensive structured legislative program is
19 necessary:

21 c. This comprehensive structured program, in order to be
successful, must include several components, none of which can
be omitted, which together form a comprehensive, unified whole;

23 d. This program is not intended to, and shall not conflict with,
reduce, or lessen the requirements of the Public School Education
25 Act of 1975, P.L.1975, c.212 (C.18A:7A-1 et seq.), but shall
instead supplement, augment, and give detail and definition to
27 that act; and

29 e. To meet these objectives, the "Education Reform Act of
1989," P.L. c. (C.) (now pending before the
Legislature as this bill) shall be liberally construed to provide the
31 most comprehensive, complete and professional instructions,
services, and support programs as possible, through the use of
33 certified personnel, and appropriately licensed or trained school
support personnel.

35 3. Each board of education shall provide a comprehensive

1 curriculum for pupils in all grade levels, which curriculum shall
conform to the regulations concerning the provision of a thorough
3 and efficient education pursuant to P.L.1975, c.212 (C.18A:7A-1
et seq.). Each curriculum shall include, but not be limited to, the
5 following course offerings:

a. Instruction by teaching staff members shall be provided in
7 all academic areas, which shall include but not be limited to
language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, foreign
9 language, and behavioral sciences.

b. Instruction by teaching staff members with subject area
11 endorsements in enrichment areas, which shall include but not be
limited to industrial arts, home economics, art, music, physical
13 education, computer use and science, health, drug, tobacco, and
alcohol abuse, and career and vocational development. Each
15 board of education, pursuant to regulations promulgated by the
State Board of Education, shall develop and implement a system
17 of assessment of the scope and efficiency of the district's
academic offerings as defined by this subsection.

c. Basic skills instruction, which shall include developmental,
19 supplemental, and remedial instruction in mathematics, reading
and language arts. This instruction shall be provided by teachers
21 hired for the sole purpose of providing that assistance, rather
than by teachers assigned to teach in other areas or courses.
23

d. Remedial and supplemental language instruction programs,
25 which shall be designed to meet the individual needs of pupils who
are deficient in the English language, irrespective of the cause of
27 that deficiency. Classroom support personnel shall be assigned
whenever appropriate to assist teachers in these programs. For
29 the purposes of this act, "classroom support personnel" shall
mean noncertified classroom school employees.

31 4. Each school district shall develop and provide programs for
all gifted and talented pupils in all grade levels pursuant to
33 regulations promulgated by the State Board of Education, which
programs shall include but not be limited to advanced placement
35 programs, advanced courses, and advanced curriculums.

5. Each school building shall contain a school library staffed by
37 a certified education media specialist and supplied with adequate
equipment and a variety of current instructional materials. The
39 materials included within the libraries shall include but not be

1 limited to books, periodicals, newspapers, documents, pamphlets,
2 photographs, reproductions, microfilms, pictorial or graphic
3 works, musical scores, maps, charts, globes, sound-recordings,
4 slides, films, film strips, video and magnetic tapes, other printed
5 or published matter, and audiovisual and other materials of a
6 similar nature. The Commissioner of Education shall, subject to
7 the approval of the State Board of Education, establish
8 regulations governing the type and quantity of materials to be
9 included in the libraries.

10 6. Each board of education, pursuant to regulations
11 promulgated by the State Board of Education, shall develop and
12 implement a system of comprehensive evaluation and assessment
13 by teaching staff members, which shall include pupils' classroom
14 teachers, to determine which pupils should be advanced to their
15 next academic grade. These systems shall not be based upon any
16 single element, process, test, or instrument, and shall include but
17 not be limited to the following components:

18 a. Continuous, comprehensive evaluation and diagnosis of pupil
19 progress in academic and educational advancement.

20 b. Pupil evaluation to assess and alleviate specific and
21 common pupil learning problems.

22 c. Evaluation of pupil interests and aspirations, both academic
23 and vocational.

24 d. Evaluation criteria including individual diagnostic
25 instruments, criteria and referenced tests, teacher-made tests,
26 and appropriate norm referenced tests.

27 7. The maximum number of pupils permitted in each class, in
28 each school district, in grades K through 12, shall be 15 pupils,
29 except for those classes which by the nature of the activity
30 conducted therein, require participation of more than 15 pupils.
31 The maximum number of pupils in prekindergarten classes shall
32 be 10 pupils. Classes consisting solely of pupils classified pursuant
33 to chapter 46 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes shall be
34 subject to the maximum class size prescribed by that section. In
35 the event that classified pupils are included in a class with
36 non-classified pupils, the combined total of all pupils shall be
37 subject to the lesser of the limit contained in this section, or any
38 statute or regulation applicable to those classified pupils.

39 The maximum class sizes prescribed by this act shall not be

1 increased or waived through regulations promulgated by the
Commissioner or State Board of Education, or by any other
3 administrative action.

8. The class size requirements established pursuant to section
5 7 of this act shall be implemented as follows:

- 6 a. Grades PreK through 2 By September 1, 1990
- 7 b. Grades 3 and 4 By September 1, 1992
- 8 c. Grades 5 through 8 By September 1, 1996
- 9 d. Grades 9 through 12 By September 1, 2000

9. There shall be assigned to each school at least one full-time
11 guidance counselor for every 100 pupils or fraction thereof
enrolled in the school.

13 10. a. Each board of education shall have on staff at least one
full-time pupil support staff team, which shall be comprised of at
15 least one of each of the following: guidance counselor, substance
abuse counselor, school psychologist, school social worker,
17 learning disabilities teacher consultant, school nurse, and
certified supervisor. The members of the pupil support team
19 shall not be members of child study teams established pursuant to
N.J.S. 18A:46-3, and shall not be utilized as part of child study
21 teams. The members of the pupils support team shall be utilized
to deal directly with pupils' social, psychological, academic and
23 vocational needs, and shall be responsible for making
recommendations for all services necessary to enable each pupil
25 served by it to succeed academically, socially and vocationally.

b. Each board shall provide sufficient release time for the
27 purposes of training the members of the pupil support system to
understand and comprehend the pupils' community, and the
29 characteristics of the pupils of the district.

11. Each board of education shall employ an appropriate
31 number of school support personnel and utilize high technology
resources in order to relieve its teaching staff members and its
33 pupil support staff team from clerical tasks.

12. Each board of education shall establish pupil attendance
35 policies, which shall not be based on punitive measures, and which
shall be based on measures aimed at encouraging pupils to attend
37 schools. These policies shall be developed in each district
through cooperation and consultation with school administrators,
39 school staff, and pupils' parents. In addition, the policies shall

1 provide incentives for pupils to attend school. Each school
2 district's local business community shall be provided the
3 opportunity to be involved in the creation, distribution and
provision of such incentives.

5 13. Each board of education shall provide a program designed
to alleviate and reduce pupil absenteeism, and shall employ
7 appropriate teaching staff members and school support personnel
for these purposes. The duties of that staff shall include but not
9 be limited to: a. investigation of frequent absenteeism, both on
an individual and district-wide basis; b. reporting absenteeism
11 problems, both on an individual and district-wide basis; c.
evaluation of the reasons for individual and district-wide pupil
13 absenteeism; d. providing counseling of pupils and parents
concerning excessive absenteeism; and e. development of a plan
15 in conjunction with the pupil and the pupil's parent or legal
guardian to improve the pupil's attendance.

17 14. Each board of education shall establish programs for
pregnant pupils, which shall include but not be limited to:
19 academic instruction; prenatal care; and training and instruction
in parenting for pupils. In addition, each school district shall
21 make available day-care facilities and programs for pupils who
are enrolled in the district and have children, until such time as
23 the pupils' education is completed.

25 15. The Commissioner of Education shall propose, and the
State Board shall adopt, rules and regulations to determine which
pupils are eligible for alternative education programs, and
27 procedures for identifying and providing programs for those
pupils. However, local districts shall be permitted to adopt
29 criteria which define pupil eligibility to participate in their
programs, provided those criteria are not inconsistent with the
31 rules and regulations adopted by the State Board of Education.

33 For the purposes of this act, the term "alternative education
program" shall mean a program of instruction, offered to middle
school, junior high school or high school pupils, which shall be
35 offered on a voluntary basis to pupils at risk, or who would
otherwise benefit from such programs. The term "at risk" shall
37 apply to pupils manifesting consistent disciplinary problems in
school, insubordination, tardiness, absenteeism, substance abuse,
39 vandalism, and verbally or physically abusive or threatening

1 behavior. The term "otherwise benefit from such programs" shall
2 mean and apply to those pupils who do not engage in these
3 behaviors, but whose academic or vocational interests and needs
4 are best served through participation in an alternative education
5 program.

6 16. a. Each board of education, according to rules adopted by
7 the State Board of Education, shall provide for the identification
8 of and a prescribed alternative education program for any pupils
9 residing in the district and enrolled in the public schools who
10 cannot be properly accommodated through the regular school
11 facilities and programs.

12 b. The identification of pupils who are eligible for alternative
13 education programs shall be reported to the parent or guardian of
14 the child, and an opportunity shall be provided for consultation by
15 the parent or guardian with the appropriate personnel of the
16 district. Enrollment and participation in these programs shall be
17 voluntary, and shall be based upon consideration of pupil interest,
18 parental approval and consideration of whether the placement
19 will best serve the academic, vocational and social needs of the
20 particular pupil.

21 17. a. It shall be the duty of each board of education to
22 provide suitable facilities and programs for all pupils determined
23 to be eligible for alternative education programs. The programs
24 may include, but shall not be limited to, any one or a combination
25 of the following alternatives:

26 (1) Special offerings;

27 (2) Special guidance and counseling programs;

28 (3) Flexible scheduling of the school program to include
29 attendance in both regular and special program offerings;

30 (4) Community action or service programs;

31 (5) Work study programs;

32 (6) Vocational/technical education programs, which may be
33 provided on a local or county basis, and which shall be funded by
34 the State;

35 (7) Alternative school approaches which include satellite
36 schools or a school within a school; and

37 (8) Teacher-pupil ratios that foster a close relationship
38 between staff and pupil.

39 b. The alternative education programs may be provided and

1 operated by one of the following entities:

(1) District boards of education;

3 (2) Consortia of district boards of education;

(3) County vocational and technical schools;

5 (4) Educational service commissions;

(5) County special services school districts;

7 (6) Jointure commissions; and

(7) Such other programs and arrangements as will meet the
9 purposes of this act, provided that those arrangements are
approved by the county superintendent of schools in the county in
11 which the district is situated.

18. For the purposes of encouraging persons to enter teaching
13 and administration in low achieving areas, the State shall provide
funds for a program of loans, grants and incentives for those
15 preparing to seek employment in such areas, which program shall
be established through regulations promulgated by the State
17 Board of Education.

19. a. All teacher training and preparation programs for
19 teachers and administrators, shall provide, pursuant to
regulations promulgated by the State Board of Education, training
21 and experience necessary to assure that the participants are
trained in those methods, techniques and content which are
23 required to be successful in low achieving education settings, and
also those factors which may make low achieving education
25 different from education in non-urban settings.

b. Each school district shall provide specialized in-service
27 training for teachers, administrators and support staff personnel.
The content and procedural aspects of that training shall be
29 determined through negotiations with the majority representative
of the teachers, administrators, or support staff personnel who
31 will receive the training. The training shall be directed toward
methods and techniques of teaching and instruction aimed at
33 creating a favorable school climate, and maintaining a
professional, effective and satisfying teaching and learning
35 environment. The training for teachers shall include, but not be
limited to, needs assessment, goals and expectation setting, and
37 methods deemed helpful and necessary in achieving those goals.
Other appropriate training shall be designated for all categories
39 of school support staff personnel as deemed necessary.

1 c. All funds expended by any school district for purposes of
training under this act shall be matched by an equivalent amount
3 of State funds, which shall be used for activities and workshops of
the same or similar nature.

5 20. a. Each school district shall provide a pool of fully
certified substitute teachers, who shall be under annual contract,
7 for purposes of replacing absent teachers. Those substitutes shall
be considered full-time teaching staff members for all purposes,
9 and shall, notwithstanding the provisions of N.J.S. 18A: 16-1.1 or
any other statute or regulation, be eligible to acquire tenure
11 pursuant to N.J.S. 18A:28-5 and N.J.S. 18A:28-6. Each teacher
so employed shall be entitled to the same benefits, including but
13 not limited to, placement on the salary guide and enrollment in
the Teachers' Pension and Annuity Fund, as other full-time
15 teachers in the district. The number of substitutes included in
the pool shall be sufficient in each district to meet the usual
17 daily teacher absence rate in the district.

b. Each district shall also have available per diem substitutes,
19 who shall be paid at daily rates, which shall be set at no less than
those established on the first step of the district's regular
21 teacher salary guide.

23 21. a. In preparing its budget for each school year each board
of education shall include as an expenditure the estimated
additional costs required to comply with the provisions of this act.

25 b. For each school year, each district shall receive an amount
of State aid equal to the additional costs required by this act.

27 c. If a district's actual expenditures vary from those
anticipated, the district's State aid shall be adjusted accordingly
29 during the year following receipt of State aid pursuant to this act.

31 d. The State aid to be paid to each district pursuant to this act
shall be based upon the actual additional costs as approved by the
Commissioner of Education for that school year.

33 e. Any board of education which is being charged tuition for
pupils receiving services pursuant to this act shall receive State
35 aid in an amount equal to the total tuition charged including any
transportation costs incurred as a result of transporting pupils in
37 connection with those services.

22. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

1
3 The purpose of this bill is to assure that those school districts
5 which do not provide educational programs comparable to those
7 offered in high achieving districts shall include mandated
9 provisions requiring instruction, services, and programs including:

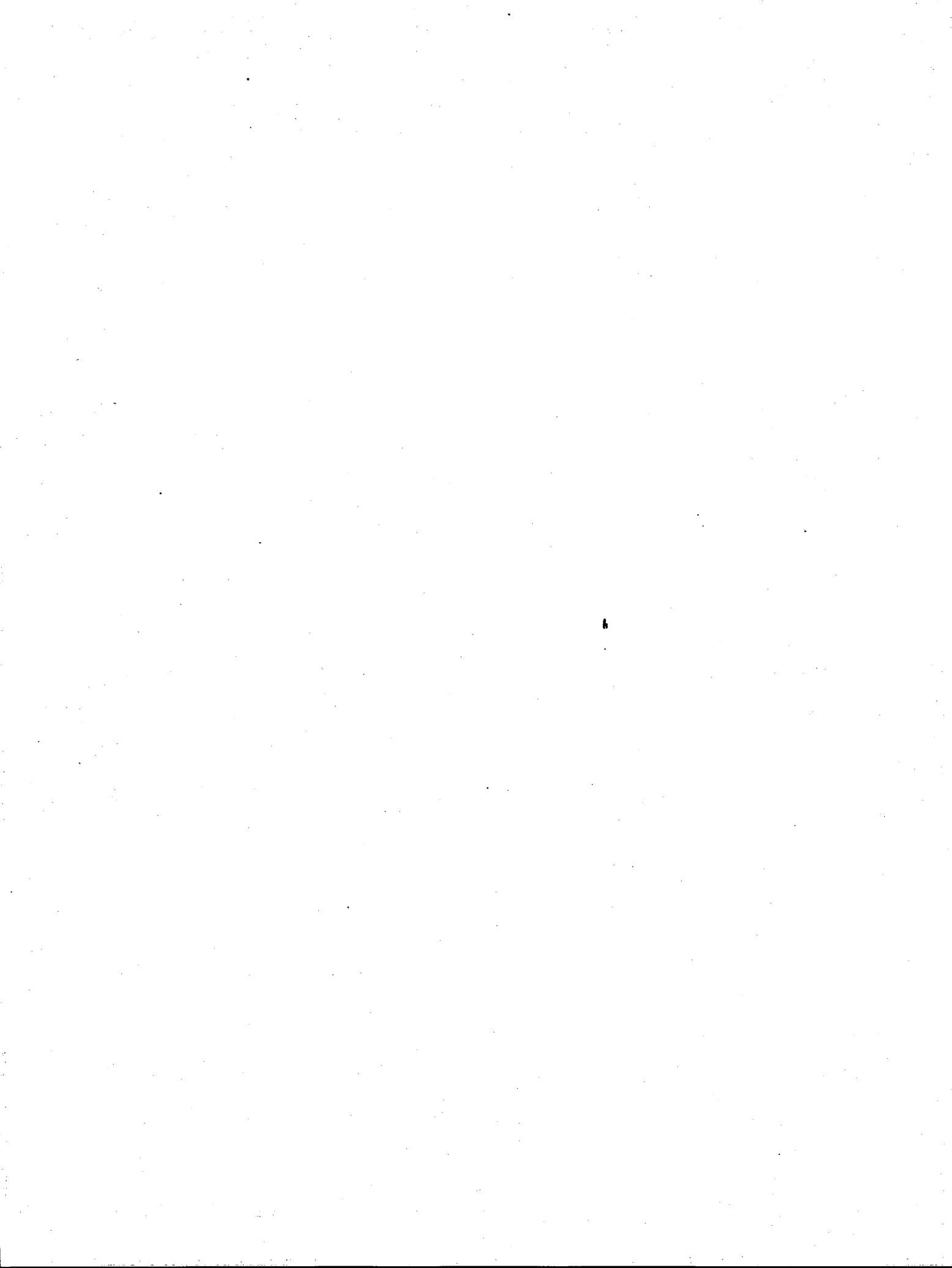
- 7 a.) academic skills and requirements
9 b.) limits on maximum class size
11 c.) use of counseling and support systems
13 d.) programs to address pupil absenteeism
15 e.) provision of alternative education programs
17 f.) programs for provisions of school staff, and
19 requirements for the preparation, training, and
21 assistance for such staff
23 g.) provisions of sufficiently qualified substitute
25 teachers and equitable treatment of such teachers.

17 This bill is not intended to in any way limit, restrict, or
19 conflict with the requirements of the Public School Education
21 Act of 1975, but rather is intended to supplement, augment, and
23 give definition and detail to that act.
25

EDUCATION

Students

25 The "Education Reform Act of 1989."



SENATOR MATTHEW FELDMAN (Chairman): Good afternoon. I am Senator Feldman, Chairman of the Senate Education Committee. I want to welcome everyone to this public hearing this afternoon. I appreciate your taking the time and effort to come here to discuss this bill with us.

May I first introduce the other members of the Committee who are here? Senator Ronald Rice of Essex County, who is the primary sponsor of the bill you have come to testify either for or against. Naturally, a household name throughout the State of New Jersey, your Mayor and my colleague in the Senate, Frank Graves, who made all of this possible. Out of our respect and affection for Frank Graves, we decided that Paterson will be the number one spot, as far as we are concerned, where we will have our public hearings. We will be hearing from both Mayor/Senator Frank Graves, who will greet us, as well as your gift to the Assembly Education Committee, Assemblyman Bill Pascrell, who has established himself as a great friend of education throughout the State of New Jersey -- one of the most articulate spokesmen we have.

The bill before us -- the Education Reform Act of 1989 -- provides that under the jurisdiction and regulations of the State Board of Education, districts would be required to provide a comprehensive curriculum, basic skills instruction, remedial and supplemental language instruction, library and media facilities, and gifted and talented programs, such as the programs we have here at the Rosa B. Park School. It would require comprehensive student evaluation and assessment, adequate counseling, and support services for the pupils. Local boards of education would have to establish pupil attendance policies and implement programs designed to alleviate and reduce pupil absenteeism, including programs for pregnant pupils and alternative education programs.

In short, it sets forth what has generally been agreed to be necessary to deal effectively with at-risk pupils. In

fact, many aspects of the program are already being implemented on a pilot program basis. In addition, this bill contains a maximum class size provision. This raised a lot of eyebrows throughout the State. But this, too, is not entirely novel. The State Board of Education already mandates a maximum class size for kindergarten pupils and for special education students. Their logic is precisely that of this bill and its sponsor, Senator Rice; namely, educational quality. Clearly, this is one of the more controversial aspects of the proposal, one which will be fully discussed in our consideration of the legislation, along with all of the other aspects of this initiative.

I hope these discussions will focus attention on a fundamental educational problem, one which has concerned me greatly, as well as Senator Rice, for many years: our failure to educate our urban children. Granted, these are problems outside of the schools: A large proportion of single-parent families, teen-age unemployment, teen-age pregnancies, drugs, pupil absenteeism, a high degree of student mobility, a high dropout rate, and a consequent need for greater educational services, including alternative educational programs, as well as bilingual education and compensatory education. Moreover, many, if not most, of these children in these schools are minority and are overwhelmingly poor.

Granted, the schools alone cannot solve all of these societal problems in our cities. However, they can ameliorate their effects on the children. We know what educational programs are effective in dealing with at-risk youth. The Education Reform Act of 1989 is an effort to implement these programs. There is no doubt that this will require a commitment -- a commitment of a great deal of energy and, also, additional State funds.

While some of the provisions of the legislation called for are achieved by the redirection and restructuring of

existing programs, school districts in distressed cities cannot provide the resources for the kinds of special programs which are essential, given the needs of their student populations. I would point out that this is a wise investment. Each individual who drops out of school, or fails to find employment, is a cost to society; a cost to society in lost tax revenues, increased welfare, and probably prison costs. Beyond that is our constitutional and our moral obligation to give these children the same opportunities as those who live in the more fortunate and more affluent communities of this State.

So, the Education Reform Act of 1989 is an effort to achieve that objective. I want to commend all those who worked so long and so hard on this major legislative initiative, especially its prime sponsor, Senator Ronald Rice. I am certain that this hearing marks the beginning of a serious effort at educational reform that has long been delayed. Any candidate worth his or her salt who would like to be Governor of this State, must address these issues in the months ahead. Senator Graves is addressing these issues in Paterson. Senator Zimmer comes from Hunterdon County, which is a rural community, yet he is concerned about the blight of urban youth. He is here today to listen to you -- this is not going to be a monologue, but a dialogue -- to listen to you.

The only other speaker who I will call upon at this time, at this so-called lectern here, or dais, is your own Mayor, my Senator and friend, Frank Graves.

S E N A T O R F R A N K X. G R A V E S, J R.: Senator Feldman, Senator Rice, and this is Senator Zimmer who just came in, and Assemblyman Pascrell-- I'm sure all of the educators in this room know him from his deep commitment to education, and more particularly, from him having been appointed by the former Mayor of this city to head the Paterson Board of Education, and also having been a member of the County College Board of Education.

Senator Feldman and Senator Rice, in particular, and that is not trying to leave Senator Zimmer out-- It happens to be that I am on a committee with Senator Rice, and one of the reasons that I decided to run for the Senate was my deep respect for a man who was there for many years before me, and whose mode has been education in this State. That is Senator Feldman, who at that time was also Mayor of Teaneck. Education is a paramount problem to all of us today. I am delighted to see the County Superintendent of Schools here. Some members of the State Education Department are here. And more specifically, undoubtedly our Superintendent saw the wisdom of sending many of his principals here. The cluster of people in the back of the room, Senator Feldman, are principals of the Paterson school system.

My commitment is deep. My commitment is the building of this school which you are in, where Paterson has its first fine arts high school. We are now in our second or third year, and we have approximately 300 students in this school. When it is fully enrolled, we will have about 500 students. It will take another two years before that happens. We built Kennedy High School, to show our commitment to education. We built School 28, again to show our commitment, and to give them places and spaces for what is education.

But, Senator, there is something deeper in the problems of America today, and more particularly in the problems of Paterson, New Jersey today. I wrote the toughest law in the country, and the toughest law in the country has to do with drugs. It says that there shall be a shield around all of our schools, and anyone selling drugs within 1000 feet of those schools, regardless of the hour of the day, or the day of the week, is going to have to go to jail. That was overlooked by some judges, but the Appellate Division just gave a unanimous decision that those judges had to adhere to what the legislators' intentions were -- that you don't sell drugs by schools.

I have written a lot of laws in those categories: raising the drinking age; the Graves Gun Act, etc. They have all worked. My drug bill is not working, Senator. My drug bill isn't working because when the Governor came to Paterson, New Jersey in 1987 to sign that bill, we had a catastrophe going. That has tripled since then. It is worse today than it was last week. Our Police Department has made 1952 arrests under the Graves Drug Law. Our county jail, which was built for 600 people, has 1500, and a waiting list to get in.

I am convinced that the only way we are going to win this, because of the infiltration of drugs and the availability of drugs, is-- My law is going to be needed, but education is going to have to walk hand in hand with us, Senator Feldman.

Your commitment is so deep, that every county college in this State is here because you said, "There will be county colleges in New Jersey." Your commitment to education is something that every member of the Senate, every member of the Legislature, and particularly the Governor of this State, no matter who the Governor is, knows that if it has to do with education, the first one they turn to is you. When you sink your teeth into what you consider a necessity of education, we know that nobody is going to be able to yank that away from you until you deliver it.

We need you now more than ever. We are going to have to lessen the sizes of our classes. We are going to have to get the complete attention of the children. The State Commissioner of Education and the Attorney General -- Mr. Cooperman, and certainly Cary Edwards -- set up a task force. Mel Persi, who is our County Superintendent, whose commitment to education equals yours, has, on many occasions, set up places, where to be, what to do. It isn't working. We've got to lessen the number of students in classrooms. We've got to intensify education, because not only is that commitment to education today; that commitment is to life itself. We're

losing. Our dropouts today aren't just statistics. Our dropouts are potential AIDS; our dropouts are potential death before they are 21 years of age. If we can turn it around-- I am convinced that my law can't work unless we can get to the child, get to the young person beforehand.

I don't know whether your law is ever realistically going to take hold. I saw that the Assembly, yesterday, passed legislation to fund education to a higher level than the commitment the Governor has made. What most people don't realize, is that his commitment is false to the point; that much of that is for teachers' pensions. It really isn't dollars and cents that translate into our system. Our system was almost bankrupt, because we cannot meet the fiscal requirements and burden the taxpayers any further. Their incomes don't call for it. When we have 3500 family homeowners in this city who have certified to the State of New Jersey that their income is less than \$10,000 a year, they really cannot afford to pay \$5000 in local real estate taxes.

So, the commitment is the State's. The intention of laws and the interpretation of laws have been that the State is responsible for giving education to our children equally. It has failed; it has failed horribly. Perhaps this legislation will even it off, and maybe there will be those who will say, "This goes to such an extreme," that maybe there will be someplace middle of the road so we can get from where we are to where this legislation would have taken us.

I know that Senator Rice wrote this legislation because he is not only a Senator, he is a Councilman in Newark. He has a few more attributes. He was formerly a police officer in Newark. So he is a former police officer who knows the problems on the street. He is a Councilman in the government of Newark today. And he is a Senator assigned to my Committee, the Senate Law, Public Safety and Defense Committee. It is challenging to work with him. He knows so

much about what you are trying to put into the laws, because he is able to be those laws.

Senator Zimmer has disappointed me. I want everybody to take a look at him. He was supposed to come and spend the night with me in Paterson about five weeks ago, and he stood me up.

SENATOR FELDMAN: It was Christmas week.

SENATOR GRAVES: Yes. He stood me up. He wanted to ride in one of our police cars that night to see how it really is. His counterpart in the Assembly came. He made a shooting; he made a a drug arrest; he made a fire. I am going to get Zimmer to spend the night here. Wait until you see what I have in store for you. If you think your partner had an interesting night, you wait and see what I've got in store for you. I hope that night comes.

Senators, this is Paterson. Paterson is a very good, decent place. It is not only Eastside High School. It's 22,500 children. It's 150,000 people. It isn't a city that wants to take a back seat. It is a city that just opened one of the most challenging schools, and I see the principal of that school sitting in the audience -- School 9, where she has 1100 students, all on one square block; where the recreation is on the roof; where the parking for the teachers is underneath; where the school is compacted, so that 1100 students and a staff of 135, and whatever else is necessary for the implementation of education-- We have done it on one block, and we did it with State help -- we admit that -- after we lost that school by fire three years ago. And we built this school, because we want our kids to have an equal opportunity. Maybe the academic part of education isn't going to keep them in school, but I wanted to have a school that a previous administration had given a lot of initiation to, and that Bill Pascrell, a member of the Board of Education at that time, had given it. I wanted to make it happen, because I feel that not

only academically are we able to keep these students in school who would be dropouts, but because it is a fine arts high school, they look forward each day to getting to school, because they are going to be doing something that is going to give them an end result -- a career.

So, Matty Feldman, as Mayor of the third largest city, I am very thankful that you chose Paterson to have your first hearing. I know that if you dig your teeth into Ronny Rice's bill, and Zimmer gives you a push-- When a lot of people say, "Wow, we can't even afford to do what we're doing. How are we going to afford to do what you want to do?" you are going to find out that we are going to have to afford what you want to do, or we are going to lose the most precious commodity we have, our kids. And believe me, they are falling like flies.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Thank you, Senator Graves. What a great advocate he is for education and for children.

Senator Zimmer picks his spots. Rather than ride in a police car with you, he would rather see this side of Paterson, with its great Rosa Park School, named for an outstanding woman, and performing arts is his theme. He writes, he paints, he sings, he dances. He'll give you a one-man recital here, Mr. Mayor. Just invite him.

Senator Ronny Rice? After that introduction, you ought to be head of the FBI.

SENATOR RICE: That's right. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Senator Graves, my colleague, is here, and a good Councilwoman and a friend of Paterson, Councilwoman Ames. I, too, am very happy that you are having this first hearing on this legislation in Paterson, because I have many friends in Paterson. I understand that the problems in Paterson related to education, and the other things that Senator Graves alluded to, are no different than those in Newark.

But let me just say a few things, and be brief about it, because it is really your day and we would like to hear

from you, as it relates to the legislation. First of all, I would not allow any legislator, any media, or anyone else to make this an urban versus suburban issue as related to S-3125. They have a right to do that, but I would challenge them on that.

The bill is a piece of legislation to address the needs of this State as they relate to education. I would not allow individuals to tell me that classroom size does not make a difference. Those individuals who tell me that, regardless of whether they live in New Jersey-- I would challenge them to remember the days of cold water flats and large families in one-bedroom apartments, much like what we are going through today. Many of those who no longer live in our urban communities don't have to go through that, and that is one reason they moved out as they grew.

I would not have anyone tell me that a classroom with 25 kids and two microscopes versus a classroom with 20 kids and 20 microscopes does not make a difference. So, this is a bill for our young people. We all articulate that we are for young people, but when it comes to really getting to the nitty-gritty of it all, we find excuses for not responding. It is always, "Me first, me first, and what about us?" That kind of a situation.

I want to salute the NJEA and its support staff and any who work with them, and the legislators and staff from State government, who made this bill a reality. I am very happy to be the sponsor of this legislation, because I would like to feel that the young folks who know me, know that I will take this as far as I have to, to make it a reality.

For those who question the money and the resources, let me just say that it is going to be a very expensive package. We have requested a fiscal note. But let me also say we are paying for education today. I think the case of Robinson v. Cahill, and the recent case of Abbott v. Burke make it very clear that we have never put enough dollars into the

education system in this State. I would not have anyone tell me, "You don't need more money. You need to get rid of the corruption and improprieties and your mismanagement." Well, let me make it very clear to people that, I happen to come from a background of some life experiences, and it has become quite obvious to me that if you don't have enough money, you can still be corrupt with that money, and you can still mismanage it. If you have enough money, you can be corrupt and mismanage it. If you have too much, you can be corrupt and mismanage it. Those are two different issues.

I am not saying we should not take the school system on and deal with those in our structure who are creating those improprieties and getting over on us. But you can't put those two things together and use it as an excuse for not fully funding education in our State, and not making things possible for young people in those school districts that are distressed. Let me also say that the schools that are number two and three presently, are not the order of the schools. They are not the order of the scores, if you look at the list. They are not all predominantly minority schools, if you look at the list. But they are the schools our young people in this State happen to attend. They are schools where most of our teachers, if not all of our teachers, and administrators, are trying to do all they can with what they have. We are up against some very tough odds.

I just wanted to say those things to you because, see, we are going to need help. There is going to be a lot of misunderstanding; there are going to be a lot of excuses for not supporting the legislation in the State House. We need people to continue to articulate the needs of our districts, and not to just say those things, but to make it, you know, heard very well -- very loud and clear -- that we are very serious about it.

I don't expect this legislation to be passed overnight. I don't expect it to be fully funded overnight. I suspect there will be legislative compromise on the legislation. I am willing to live and work with that, along with those who support this legislation, as long as it makes good sense and is going to benefit the districts. But we need citizens, those who are sincere about moving our youngsters into adulthood with sound, healthy minds, not to just sit back and criticize, or sit back and talk about the legislation, but be active throughout the State in your churches, your schools, and your communities. Let folks know there is a bill. It is very necessary that you band together and speak, and insist that we do the right thing.

In closing, let me say this about funding: Those of you who live in cities like Paterson know very well that Joe Maher (phonetic spelling), along with many others of us, has identified the city, particularly with this garbage problem, as in very serious need of dollars. We are raising the point that we have identified the problem as at least being a \$100 million worth of problem as related to garbage. We in State government could not find \$100 million. Lo and behold, one day someone went to the beach, and they looked and saw that the beach was dirty. They came back and told State government, "The beach is dirty," and the next day Senator Feldman, myself, and others on the Appropriations Committee found \$100 million. I am still trying to figure out where we got it from, but we got it.

State legislators like myself, Senator Zimmer, Senator Feldman, Senator Graves, who was here, and others, have to recognize that those of you in the districts elect us, and we represent you first. But we also have to recognize that our title is "State Senator." That means that we represent every individual in this State, which means that we have to be reasonable, objective, and rational in our approaches. When I voted the \$100 million to clean those beaches up, it was not

because the people at the beach vote for me. It was because real people live there, and there are real needs there, and there are real jobs and opportunities there.

I brought that scenario up to show you that we cannot allow those who come from middle-class communities, upper-middle-class communities, where there are no serious problems with education, to deny us, because the voters there do not see our needs the same. Our legislators who represent the people in this State should go back to those districts and help us to educate them, too.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR FELDMAN: For one who didn't even want to say a few words, you said a mouthful -- a very meaningful mouthful.

Senator Graves, thank you very much -- you and Mr. Wells, whoever made all of this possible. We'll be seeing you Thursday.

SENATOR GRAVES: I am leaving my education supporter here.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Okay.

SENATOR GRAVES: She is a school teacher, and--
(balance of Senator Graves' statement lost, as he was walking away from microphone)

SENATOR FELDMAN: To my left is Dr. Deena Schorr, who is the Legislative Aide to this Committee, working out of the Office of Legislative Services. She earned her doctorate the hard way, and is very, very much a part of our Senate Education Committee. To the left of Senator Rice is the liaison, or the representative of the Senate Majority, another who has earned his doctorate the hard way, Dr. Robert Noonan, who this morning taught three classes at Nutley High School. He is here this afternoon to listen and to participate in this open hearing. With us, too, today, is Judy People, representing the Minority, the distaff side, but the Republican Minority of the Senate. She, too, is at every meeting of the Education Committee.

Our first witness will be Assemblyman Bill Pascrell, who represents your district, but as Senator Rice said, efforts in legislation are on behalf of all the people of the State. Bill, we thank you very much for helping to arrange this.

Assemblyman Bill Pascrell.

A S S E M B L Y M A N W M. J. P A S C R E L L, J R.:
Good morning, Senator, good afternoon, and good evening. How are you? Superintendent Persi, members of the administration in the City of Paterson, distinguished Senators, and guests, welcome to our fair city. Senator, this is not a mutual admiration society, but I made a statement the other day, and I mean it sincerely. There are two people in this State who I believe are the most influential in terms of education, who know -- I don't know if I can say, "know what's best;" I don't think you would want me to say that -- but who have probably done more to change education in a positive sense than any people I know. That is yourself, a Democrat, Senator Feldman, and Assemblyman Palaia, who is the Chairman of the Assembly Education Committee, a Republican. I look to you both as my mentors in much of what I am going to be saying today, and I know that in the future, education will be best served if we listen to your directions, and I mean that sincerely.

As a parent, a former teacher, local board member -- that was probably the most thankless job we all had, if we served on boards of education -- as a Board President, and now as a legislator, I have witnessed firsthand the workings of the T&E law, on both sides of the desk, both sides of the Board table. One of the great success stories of the T&E law which has been knocked from pillar to post, is that of students, with the assistance of their teachers and principals and parents, increasing their test scores dramatically over the years. This is true, even in our poor urban and rural districts.

However, I believe we have reached the limits of success using the current process. Our poorest districts still

have major and seemingly intractable problems. I'm glad that you and Senator Rice have put before us an agenda that is open-ended, that needs to be looked at and examined very carefully, and have asked for our comments. If I may be so bold, I have a few today.

Senator Zimmer, it is important that we go into this next phase of the battle to solve the major problems of education in this State as a united team. This cannot be a Democratic or Republican piece of legislation. This cannot be a monopoly of any one person or any one constituency, be they teachers, parents, or legislators, because we have come to that crossroad when we truly are talking about human life.

One of the pieces of legislation -- and there are hundreds, as you know, that come before us-- But in the summer of 1988, on a warm summer morning, we responded in a very different way from how we have responded before to educational problems in this State. There was a bill before the Assembly Education Committee which dealt with the little township --, Fairfield Township in South Jersey, represented by Assemblyman Collins and Assemblyman Stuhltrager, two Republican Assemblymen, who I have a great deal of respect for. They had come before our Committee to ask for \$750,000. It was an effective system; it was providing efficient education, but they somehow got into the hole. As a representative of what is primarily an urban district -- District 35 -- I had to make a decision that day. The first thought that came into my mind was, I know that the needs in the Newarks and the Trentons and the Patersons and the Camdens and the Jersey Cities of this State are so deep and profound, that every dime means something. How can rural and suburban legislators stand before this Committee and ask for money, when they know the problems we are facing in the urban districts? Thank goodness I did not choose that track down which to travel.

The record is clear. We only change education in the State of New Jersey when we think about students in all parts of the State, and not just any one particular geographical area. If there is a demise in one part of the State, there is, slowly, a demise in another part of the State. In other words, in street language, because I came up on these mean streets, "We're all in the same boat." The quicker we realize that, the closer we are going to come to solving the problems we face in education today.

We need everyone's help. There is something to be learned in the cities, and there is something to be learned in the rural and suburban areas. I have read your bill very carefully -- S-3125 -- and I would like you to think of some things that I have to offer. These are not offered as criticism, so much as an attempt to expand upon your perceptions of what needs lie before us. I would caution against any further attempt to lock step the process in education today. What I mean by that is, we probably need less mandates, and not more mandates in education.

I would be very cautious about mandating staff programs, staff patterns. I would be very cautious about mandating State class sizes. I would be very cautious, and a bit anxious, about mandating the number of guidance counselors per students. None of those, taken out of context, gives us the full strength of 3125, for truly it is an attempt to speak to the major problems we face in education today. However, we must realize, that in the Carnegie report -- in the Carnegie Foundation, in the report card on school reform, which interviewed teachers just a short time ago, they came to some conclusions about the teachers who we expect at the individual station, and in the individual schools, to be providing quality education for our children. Fifty-three percent of those teachers commented that teacher involvement in shaping curriculum had either decreased or not changed. Seventeen

percent said that their morale had gotten better since 1983 -- only 17% -- at a time when teachers' salaries have increased.

In the leadership of the principal category, 57% indicated that there was either no change or that conditions became worse over the last five years. Seventy percent indicated that the fiscal resources available to their schools had either not changed or had gotten worse over the last six years. Sixty-nine percent indicated -- and I bring your attention to this, Mr. Chairman -- that funds to support innovative ideas had not changed or had decreased -- innovation. Eighty-five percent complained that freedom from non-teaching duties had either not changed or had worsened.

The seriousness of students either had not improved or had worsened, 68% said. And some 78% surveyed stated that classroom interruptions had either worsened or not changed. Political interference in education in their districts had increased, 54% reported, while another 56% noted that the burden of bureaucratic paperwork had increased.

I suggest to you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, that the reforms we should be talking about are not just about academic excellence and teacher quality. They are also about the distribution of political authority among units of government. At stake in the reform movement, along with school curriculum and the nature of the teacher work force, are issues about leadership and initiative in educational policy making.

I believe that if we are going to address the central problems in urban education, we need to tackle the question of governance. Who governs the schools?

I wish to conclude with a statement which I think is profound. Robert Winters, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Prudential Life Insurance Company, which I think is prophetic-- I usually don't agree with insurance companies, as you know, Senator. I know that thinking people throughout New

Jersey recognize the need for change. Many folks are already making gallant efforts to improve our schools. The time has come for a truly comprehensive and cooperative effort for truly fundamental changes. As President Mary Futrell of the NEA put it, "Please don't come to us and say, 'This is the plan.' If you do, the educational community will resist. But if you come and say, 'We will work with you to help determine what the plan should be,' you will have 100% cooperation."

I ask you, Senator Feldman, to also consider in your deliberations the bill that I placed before the Legislature -- S-4007 -- which deals with the very governance of schools in the State of New Jersey. Our kids deserve better than "business as usual." Our kids deserve better than the intricate fights between the components who are interested in education, be they the teachers' bargaining unit, the principals' bargaining unit, the students, the parents. No change will be meaningful in a city until all of those components are at the table, and are part of creating the plan.

Senator, thank you for giving me this opportunity. It has been an honor.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Thank you, Bill. We will check on Senate Bill -- Assembly Bill 4007. Senator Graves just went into shock when he heard you say, "S-4007."

Senator Zimmer, Senator Rice, any questions? Senator Zimmer?

SENATOR ZIMMER: Thank you, Senator. I really appreciate that statement. It was very thoughtful and thorough.

You expressed reservations about mandated class sizes, mandated staffing levels, and expressed a desire for freedom at the local level. Could you tell us what you find most attractive about this legislation? If you don't mandate programs or class size, how can we, at the State level, do more than simply funnel money into the systems?

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: What I find attractive about this legislation, is that it responds to the major problems which are facing urban education. Class size is a major problem in urban education, particularly class sizes between pre-K and fifth and sixth grades, which absolutely have to be reduced.

My thoughts, though, would be, would we be better off in mandating a class size, or might we be better off by providing incentives for a system? We have talked about that. If we could provide incentives for lowering that class size and let local people decide -- teachers, parents, and those involved in education-- I think that more mandates, particularly in this area, are going to exacerbate the relationship that already exists between those who think they know all the answers about education, and those who think they know all the answers about education. I use that as an example.

I think the bill also speaks to the necessity-- We are not only talking about basic skills any longer. That is not good enough. Our kids are better than that. It responds to the question of expectations. What do we expect? Do we expect kids in the urban areas simply to be concerned and caught up in learning those basic skills? They are much better than that. They need to be involved in the sciences. They need to be involved in the arts, both fine arts and other arts that are available. I think the bill speaks to the most important issues in urban education. I am simply asking the Committee to look at this very carefully before we mandate. Are there other ways to do it? And I think there are other ways to do it, if we are willing to tackle the question of governance.

Who is in charge of the schools? There is a tremendous amount of creativity, Senator, in every school in this city. When I was President of the Board, it became quite obvious to me -- more important than what we read and what we

hear. I saw it firsthand. That creativity needs to be unleashed. It is not going to be unleashed in more mandates. It will be unleashed when we tell teachers to work together. We want to hear from them what is critical, what is important in education. We want principals to tell us. We do not want them to simply be conduits for paperwork, to provide work to bureaucrats and other places in this State.

And do you know what, Senator? There is a tremendous amount of creativity within the State Department of Education. We need to get those people into the urban areas to help the teachers before there is a crisis; before there is a Jersey City -- now.

SENATOR FELDMAN: In my opening remarks, I mentioned restructuring of our system. I want to make it clear that nothing is etched in stone. If we thought this bill sponsored by Senator Rice was a permanent bill -- no changes, no amendments, no flexibility -- we would not be having these public hearings. So, you have made a lot of sense. Everything has been recorded and will be transcribed. You and other witnesses will shed some light on a bill that all of us believe in, as far as its principle is concerned.

There will be refinements to this bill and you, the first witness, have made the first big step towards that goal. Thank you, Mr. Pascrell.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: Thank you, Senator.

SENATOR FELDMAN: I think the sponsor wishes to ask a question. Meanwhile, Judith, you will be the next batter-up.

SENATOR RICE: I don't need a response. You asked us to give some consideration and thought to the issue of mandating. I certainly concur with you. We will look at that. But, you also mentioned that maybe we could do something else. That is the problem I am having in urban districts, particularly when you are going into classrooms and you are taking out closet space and losing programs. Also, the schools

are built on bond issues, because they could not come in any other way.

I have come to learn that unless you mandate certain things, number one, people don't respond, even those who mean well; and number two, the system does not respond. So, we need to have some alternative to mandating class size. Maybe it should be 15; maybe it should be 18.

I also want to leave you with this thought, and I don't need a response. What many people in this State who talk about class size are not aware of, is that the average classroom in a school in the State of New Jersey is between something like 18 to 20 students. In cities like Paterson, and Newark and others, classroom size may run to 30, 40, or 50. So we need these buildings overhauled; I mean the old buildings. How much more can we do? It would cost more to keep them. So we may have to mandate certain kinds of things, unless we can come up with solutions. But, we will look at it.

ASSEMBLYMAN PASCRELL: But, Senator Rice, it is peculiar that we have a budget that calls for 500 new jail cells, and not one new classroom in the State of New Jersey. The renovations are being put off. We have old buildings where we are throwing good money out, and it is becoming bad money. That is a very serious problem.

I also ask you to think that when we are talking about building schools and renovation and capital expenditures in cities, we are not simply talking about bricks and mortar. We're talking about part of the restructuring of the system, because if you have four old schools within one square mile, and they are going to have to come down -- some of them are 125 years old in your own city -- we are going to be talking maybe about one or two cities, and not four. You're talking about restructuring; you are not just talking about bricks and mortar.

Thank you, Senator.

SENATOR RICE: Exactly.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Thank you, Bill. When Ronald Reagan and John Wayne were riding herd together, Senator Ewing headed the Assembly Education Committee. Senator Ewing is from Bedminster, and we welcome him here to this garden spot of America -- the City of Paterson, which is so warmly embracing us and receiving us. Jack, I really want to thank you, as well as Richard Zimmer for coming here today. Although they reside in rural and suburban New Jersey, their interest is in all the children in the State. So, thank you for joining us.

SENATOR EWING: Also, I think you should tell the people that we are Republicans.

SENATOR FELDMAN: He represents the nameless, faceless minority in the Senate.

SENATOR EWING: We are the minority.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Right. Our next witness will be Judith Savage, representing the State Department of Education.

J U D I T H S A V A G E: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I am the Legislative Liaison from the Department of Education. I am here today to provide both the Committee and the audience with a general overview of the Department of Education's position on this bill. Assistant Commissioner Joel Bloom will offer the Department's full testimony at your February 23 hearing in Trenton. He will address the specific programmatic aspects of the bill at that time.

The Department of Education shares the sponsor's goal of continuing to improve education in New Jersey, and offering all New Jersey schoolchildren the educational opportunities they need and they deserve. However, the Department of Education cannot support the omnibus bill that is before you today.

While the proposal does include some very good programs, it sets them up as mandates which must be carried out by every school district in New Jersey, regardless of whether they are needed or appropriate. This runs counter to New

Jersey's curriculum delivery system, as established under the Thorough and Efficient Education Law.

Under T&E, the Legislature and the State Board of Education set broad policy and educational goals. It is up to each local school district to decide how it can best carry out these general directions. The specific program, curriculum, and staffing mandates established in the bill run counter to this existing system. Furthermore, they would be applied without any regard to local need, appropriateness, or cost.

The Department of Education would much prefer to see State assistance and incentives for educational improvement, such as those which would be provided under the bill that Assemblyman Pascrell mentioned. The Department of Education is particularly concerned about the maximum class size provision of the bill, especially in light of the enormous cost it would carry, both in terms of staffing and school facilities. We firmly believe that class size should be determined by pedagogy, not by statewide ratios.

The proposals included in the bill would cost billions of dollars to implement. The Department has been asked to prepare a fiscal note on the bill, and we are working up a detailed cost estimate. However, even without the specific dollar figures in hand, it is clear that 100% State funding for all new costs associated with the bill would upset the equalization funding formula, which attempts to direct the most State aid to low-wealth communities where it is most needed.

We are concerned that the bill seems to ignore the State's current fiscal situation. I am sure everybody here knows that educational dollars are very limited at this time, and that at this time the State cannot fully fund the education funding formulas. By providing 100% funding, this bill would direct limited dollars to the wealthy communities, which should be able to fund the majority of educational costs with local tax dollars.

I hope this general overview is helpful to the Committee in its deliberations. As I noted, Assistant Commissioner Bloom will appear before you on February 23, to answer your questions and address the specific programs in the bill.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Any questions for Judith? (no response) You know, unless we restructure the whole tax structure of New Jersey, year after year we are going to have crises after crises. Now is the time for us to realize that New Jersey is going to be in trouble educationally speaking, unless we face the realities. If we believe education is our number one priority -- to me, it is my number one priority -- we have to take the burden off the home property taxpayer. We have to give more State aid to the schools of the State. This is a mandatory situation, as far as I am concerned, and I hope we get this message back through this bill to the next Governor, and to our present Governor.

Thank you very much.

MS. SAVAGE: Thank you.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Oh, I'm sorry, a question from Senator Zimmer. Richard?

SENATOR ZIMMER: Judy, are you in a position to discuss the Department's position on the effect of class size on the educational result, or should we wait and ask Dr. Bloom that question?

MS. SAVAGE: I think I would prefer, if you don't mind, to wait until Dr. Bloom appears before you. He is the expert on class size, and I think he would be better prepared to address that.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Thank you. She saves the easy questions and answers for Dr. Bloom.

Our next witness will be Lydia Brown, a teacher from School 30. Lydia is my next-door neighbor in Englewood, and she has dedicated these many years, not only to her family, but to education.

L Y D I A W. B R O W N: Thank you, Senator Feldman.

SENATOR FELDMAN: You're welcome, Lydia.

MS. BROWN: Senator Feldman and Senator Rice, I am delighted at the direction you are taking us in education; and I would like to read the statement I have written:

I am employed by the Paterson Board of Education. My present assignment is a classroom teacher for the eighth grade gifted and talented students at the Martin Luther King School. In this experience, as in all academic experiences, the library facilities are obligatory for a successful program.

We use the library facilities for books on a wide variety of reserach topics. We borrow novels for these students on a multiplicity of interests. We have reserved time this month to use the Public Library periodicals for supportive information in the area of African/American contemporary contributions to our country. A variety of reference materials beyond the basic encyclopedia is needed for knowledge. We need to take advantage of available encyclopedia devoted to special areas, e.g., music, medicine, cultural arts, mathematics, science, Hispanic/Americans and African/Americans. We must overload our schoolchildren with all sorts of written English language to avoid language illiteracy. The elementary student must be saturated with words via books on every subject at every level in enormous quantities. There is a desperate need for assisting the inner city youngster in test-taking skills and decoding skills through constant language exposure.

The students who are working with me this year have a special yearning for literature and creative writing. We should be able to work in the library every day to just whet the appetite of their voracious needs.

We are forced to walk to the city branch library in our district each week. Even these facilities are extremely limited. The Martin Luther King School does, however, have a library. Nevertheless, the library is used for classrooms every day and is unstaffed.

It certainly is our responsibility to make every effort to allow all of our youngsters the use of an adequate school library and a supplementary city public library.

Are there any questions?

SENATOR FELDMAN: Thank you, Lydia. If I may, because we go back all these years--

MS. BROWN: Yes?

SENATOR FELDMAN: Does anyone on the panel wish to ask Ms. Brown any questions?

SENATOR ZIMMER: The facility you describe probably violates the requirements of T&E. Do you know whether it has been held to be in violation of the State regulations respecting the--

MS. BROWN: I am not in a position to answer on that level. You would have to ask someone who does that kind of work. I am just a classroom teacher giving my opinion.

SENATOR ZIMMER: You have to do what you have to do with what you've got.

MS. BROWN: Yes.

SENATOR ZIMMER: Thank you.

SENATOR FELDMAN: We'll get that answer for Senator Zimmer.

MS. BROWN: Do you want this copy of my statement?

SENATOR FELDMAN: Yes, we would like to have a copy, Lydia, although this hearing is being recorded.

Frank Pellecchia, Librarian for the Rosa B. Park School. Are you related to the very famous Ozzie Pellecchia?

F R A N K P E L L E C C H I A: Just in the general way that all men are related to one another.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Okay.

MR. PELLECCCHIA: Good afternoon.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Well, that could be taken up a million different ways.

MR. PELLECCCHIA: I have never known him myself, but I certainly respect what he has done.

I am a specialist in generalities. I am a specialized clerk. I am probably what is called a "real librarian." I am a graduate of the Pratt Institute, and I don't throw that around simply for the sake of ego, but so that you will know that I am the real stuff, and am not a sham.

I think we are probably abortionists, and we are probably presenting a Barmecidal feast. At least that is the way I see it, and I will tell you why. If we allow a teacher to fertilize a mind, and we allow a teacher to kindle in our children -- good children, children I want to teach, children I have been with since 1963, who can really do the stuff, after having been given that stuff by great teachers, which we have here-- If we pour, or work on that kid and get him to do something, and he can now know a quadratic equation, or he can now know a French verb, he immediately has a desire to grow. In a sense, that embryo has begun to become a fetus, and that fetus expands, and that fetus, outside the classroom, which is the uterus, wants to move forward; wants to gain more material; wants to grow, where does he go to grow? He goes to the supplementary source; he goes to the complimentary source. That is the repository of learning. I guess that is what is called a "library." It is called by other names these days.

So what we do, in effect, is kindle and excite the kid to know something, and then we immediately guillotine it. In the libraries, as they are, we present, as I said, a Barmecidal feast; a feast that looks beautiful, as in the Arabian nights, has much that is delightful, much that would cause the appetite to water, and then when they go to bite into it, they find it is plastic; they find that it is evanescent; they find that it is nonexistent. So we have cut them off. I think I can say this, because I don't know the larger areas. So here I am going from the specific to the general, but I think the paradox works.

I see kids as they are. I see them here, day to day. I see them in the Paterson Free Public Library, where I am a reference librarian. I know the state of the Paterson Library; I know Rosa Park's; I know Kennedy High School, where I was. I know we have fine minds. The mind is the same wherever we go, whether we go to Bulgaria, whether we go to Tanzania, whether we go to Paterson, New Jersey. Once it is excited, once it is quickened, once we begin fertilizing it, it has an indigenous desire to reach out. We do not supply that reaching out here; we really don't. We want to, but we have to have the conduits open so that we keep pouring forth. If you wish to do it, then I have to say, like Galileo, "Eppure si muove," if you want to close them, close them, but they are still going to have the need.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Well, you have kindled and excited this Committee. (laughter and applause) That was very positive. I thought it was great. See, they say that librarians are staid, conservative, only book-minded. You have destroyed that myth. (laughter)

MR. PELLECCIA: I hope I have put in its place something, then, that is adequate. Thank you. (applause)

SENATOR FELDMAN: Peter Tirri, representing the Paterson Education Association. Peter, you were at the original meeting, weren't you?

P E T E R A. T I R R I: Yes. I apologize for having to follow Frank -- gee!

SENATOR FELDMAN: Incidentally, I have been advised by the engineer -- sound engineer -- that we are standing too close to the mike. Not you, but others before you. So, would you step back just a little bit. Thank you.

MR. TIRRI: Good afternoon, Senators. My name is Peter Tirri. I am President of the Paterson Education Association. I have been a teacher in the public schools of New Jersey since 1968.

I come before you today to express to you my wholehearted support for S-3125, the Education Reform Act of 1989. I believe this bill is one of the most significant legislative initiatives to be introduced in New Jersey.

For years, we, as educators, have heard the chorus of doomsayers who condemn the efforts of our public schools. They claim the schools are failing -- turning out semi-literate unemployables who are the cause of the deterioration of our society. At the same time, these same people, when faced with a societal problem, call upon the schools to solve them: Teen-agers are becoming pregnant -- put sex ed in the schools! Drugs are a problem -- "Just say no," in our classrooms. Mom and pop have abrogated their responsibilities as parents -- let the schools teach values, and morals, along with reading, writing, and math.

And all the while, make no changes in the basic structure of our schools. While programs to meet societal needs have been mandated, no significant actions have been taken to address the needs of the schools within this changing society. I believe S-3125 begins to address these issues.

The provisions of this legislative initiative are extensive, and rightfully so, to meet the needs of students throughout the State. Our children are our future, and public education remains America's traditional source of hope. If our society is to succeed, our schools and our students -- all of our students -- must be given the possibility of success. The basis for hope.

Large class size, too few counsellors and support systems, student absenteeism, lack of alternative education programs, and never enough substitutes, are but a few of the problems which confront students and staff every day. This reality is not merely a problem in cities such as Paterson, but a statewide reality being faced in many of our school systems -- large and small, urban, suburban, and rural.

As Chairperson of NJEA's Urban Education Committee, and a Paterson teacher for 19 years, I have observed these problems firsthand. Over two years ago, the Urban Education Committee began an extensive search of the shortcomings of the education program in our State. We interviewed over 700 school employees from all segments of the public school spectrum. We held round-table discussions in 17 districts, which involved another 400 employees. These staff members -- the practitioners -- gave us vivid insight into the problems faced in our schools. Not suprisingly, the problems of urban schools are of a greater magnitude, but only in that these problems are faced by more people in more compacted areas. Senate Bill 3125 can be an effective response to the concerns expressed by practitioners in our schools, not theorists who pontificate from stone cold edifices of bureaucracy.

The topics covered by this legislation are necessities that our children must have, if they are to successfully meet the demands of our high-tech society. If we are to meet the needs of society, we must provide our children with the basis for success included in this legislation.

The sponsors of this bill, Senators Feldman and Rice, have indicated that this bill will help every public school youngster in this State. What you, as legislators, must provide, is the courage to see this bill reach reality. You must reject the whining of nay-sayers who will present roadblocks along the way.

There are some who say that local input was lacking in the development of the legislation. Our urban challenge survey results clearly discount this. Our staff members -- the people who work in the schools every day -- have clearly and eloquently voiced their support for the remedies provided in this legislation.

There will be those, Senators, who will decry the alleged lack of accountability in the legislation. New Jersey

must have the busiest Department of Education in the country, ready and very willing to address these areas. In fact, the Department is establishing a record for itself in this area which is known statewide. If there is further need for greater accountability measures, and, quite frankly, I don't believe there are, but if there is a greater need, I am certain the State Department will take on this responsibility and provide the necessary leadership in this area. After all, that is their job.

I must also point out that we, as teachers and staff members, do not object or oppose the proper monitoring of programs and expenditures. We, like you, are also taxpayers in this State, and we oppose abuses of the public trust and treasury as much as you do. However, these concerns about alleged lack of accountability are not reasons to defeat this legislation. The assistance to students in our State far outweighs any petty concerns raised in this area.

Some will question the impact of class size limits on our classes. The practitioners in those classes know that limiting class sizes will improve performance, and so do those who criticize this provision. If class size limitations are not vital to success, why do the best private schools proudly boast about their low teacher/pupil ratios and class size limits? Do not students in Paterson deserve the same opportunities as the wealthy in our State?

Finally, there will be those who will bemoan the costs of this legislation and, make no mistake, this legislation will require additional expenditures of State moneys. These expenditures are as much of a concern to us as they are to you. We are, as I said, not only school employees, but taxpayers as well.

However, we recognize, and we hope the Senate will recognize as well, that the intent of this legislation is simply too important to dismiss because of cost. Can we

continue to justify 40 bilingual students in a class because of lack of funding? Can we continue to provide libraries for students fortunate enough to live in wealthy communities, while forcing other students to receive makeshift services from rolling carts? Our students in urban and rural New Jersey, and much of suburban New Jersey as well, must not be permitted to become "make-do" students. We must provide the high quality education received in the Princetons and Ridgewoods of New Jersey to students in Camden and Burlington, Paterson and Sussex. That is the role and responsibility of the State, the Commissioner of Education, and the schools. Our students deserve no less.

S-3125 provides an exciting rebirth for education in New Jersey. It is educational reform as it should be, based upon the expertise of the people who best understand the problems of our schools -- the practitioners who staff our schools. S-3125 will be a high-water mark of the education reform movement, and make New Jersey a leader not only in words, but in deeds as well. It deserves your support.

Senators, I thank you for the opportunity to share with you my thoughts on this important legislative initiative. I would be more than happy to answer any questions you might have.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Thank you, Mr. Tirri. Any questions from the panel? Yes, Senator Ewing?

SENATOR EWING: Mr. Tirri, in Paterson are there parochial schools?

MR. TIRRI: Yes.

SENATOR EWING: What are the class sizes in them?

MR. TIRRI: I don't know, Senator. I don't have any of that information. We do not represent the people in the parochial schools, so I really don't know.

SENATOR EWING: Oh, I realize that you don't represent them, but being in the education field, I thought you might know.

MR. TIRRI: I don't have that information.

SENATOR EWING: But by and large, the parochial schools do give a very fine education, don't they?

MR. TIRRI: I don't know, I assume.

SENATOR RICE: Mr. Chairman?

SENATOR FELDMAN: Yes, Senator Rice?

SENATOR RICE: I understand Senator Ewing's concern and question. Let me just add, I don't know the size of the parochial school classes here, but I can say this to you: In the City of Newark, and elsewhere, parochial schools are no longer the parochial schools we knew. Classroom size has started to swell, and school institutions are closing down because they still cannot meet the costs of maintaining the system itself. But I think the main thing I wanted to say is, regardless of classroom size, there is a difference between those school systems now. Parochial schools get the opportunity to select the students who will participate. Public schools get the opportunity to try to cater to everyone in the community who have the basic right and need for an education, regardless of their income level. (applause)

SENATOR EWING: Senator Rice, I realize that, but I thought maybe somebody who taught in the system might have some idea what the facts were. I have been on the Education Committee a lot longer than you have, and I know those other facts.

SENATOR FELDMAN: I do know, Senator Ewing, that you agree with me that the private schools have much smaller classes. When we talk about a non-public school education, we talk about private, as well as parochial schools. Some parochial schools have closed because the parishes could not afford them. Other parish schools are open, and they get an avalanche of non-denominational students, because they do applaud a good education, and the discipline that goes with it.

Thank you very much, Peter. Our next witness will be Donna Mickolajczyk, President of the Education Association of Passaic.

D O N N A M I C K O L A J C Z Y K: Thank you. Good afternoon. I would like to thank you for this opportunity to come before you to speak about the education reform bill. As you said, my name is Donna Mickolajczyk. I am the President of the Education Association of Passaic. I speak to you from my 12 years of teaching experience in all grades from pre-first through high school, which is where I currently teach remedial reading.

There was a quote in yesterday's North Jersey Herald & News from Jeanne Reock, a spokesperson for the New Jersey School Boards Association. In speaking in objection to this Education Reform Act, she said: "This assumes one solution for all school districts in the State. Many of those mandates would be appropriate for some boards, but not for all." And we heard a very similar comment before from the State Department of Education.

How ironic to read such a statement when the State mandates a "solution" that every child in the State of New Jersey pass the same High School Proficiency Test, whether or not the mandate is appropriate "for all."

Why isn't it appropriate for all? We know that each child is an individual, with their own educational and environmental differences, experiences, talents, and abilities. Somehow we are expected to take these individuals and homogenize them into an identical product by graduation 12 years later. While this is a nearly impossible task, it is further exacerbated by the extreme differences that exist between school districts and the programs they provide.

The time has come for the State of New Jersey to provide more than just tests to its school districts. The time has come to provide the tools necessary to prepare our students to take the test. The Education Reform Act of 1989 is the tool.

S-3125 is extremely comprehensive, and it addresses a great number of problems. There are too many parts to it for me to discuss all of them here. Let me give you some examples of how it can impact on the differences within my own district of the City of Passaic.

All of our students need to be exposed to a full library with a wide variety of instructional materials. They aren't! How do we develop a love of reading and an appreciation of printed material, the knowledge of how to do a research paper, or the geographical skills used with maps, charts, and globes, when only some schools have the facilities and equipment? While some of our schools in Passaic have full libraries, others have limited ones, and some have none at all.

There are certain schools in the City of Passaic that substitutes prefer to go to. Unfortunately, because subs are so difficult to find, their wishes are often granted. But let me just say, they are not difficult to find because the district does not pay well. We are currently paying \$80 a day for a certified substitute. We just have the pool of people out there to call upon. This means that some subs have their wishes, and some schools are always lacking substitutes. The result is disrupted classes, since the uncovered class is often then divided up among the other teachers. While it is difficult enough, if not nearly impossible to teach with your own 28 or 30 children, add eight or so more to it for the day and see how you can teach.

Further complicate this problem with the fact that special area teachers, such as speech and special education, enrichment teachers like art, music, and physical education, and remedial teachers in reading, mathematics, and language arts are almost never replaced with a substitute. These areas often go neglected for days, weeks, and yes, even months, because a pool of substitute teachers under contract is not available. The sad fact is that those subs who do come in day

after day are usually told to stay home on the 20th day, so that the district does not have to pay them the salary of a beginning teacher.

A pool of substitute teachers, hired under a regular contract, is something Passaic, and many other districts, desperately need.

Before, I mentioned class sizes of 28 and 30. Yes, there are some classes that are even larger. As a matter of fact, I think the recent statistics that just came out showed that Passaic was the lowest district of professional staff per 1000 pupils of all of the Group 4 school districts. Every year that I can remember, Passaic requests from the county, and is given, a waiver on kindergarten class size. In some cases, we have had kindergarten classes as large as 33 and 34. The presence of an aide is supposed to make everything all right. Well, it doesn't, because an instructional aide is not there to supplant the teacher. Every grade, but in particular the primary grades of K through three, should have limits on class size. This is when the very foundation of learning is taking place, and it can't happen when a teacher is attempting to cope with 30 children who all have their own individual rate of achievement.

I ask you: When Clifton has only 16 or 17 students in a class, and Passaic has 28 or 30, do we really believe we are providing equal educational opportunities? Certainly mandating class size will create facility problems. We have no place to put additional classes. There isn't an empty closet or phone booth left. But the lack of school facilities has been placed on the back burner for too long. Maybe this will help bring the problem to the public's attention.

Pupil attendance policies must have incentives, rather than punishments. The attendance policy we have in Passaic mandates automatic retention for any student who has 18 unexcused absences. What that means is, if your parent can or

is willing to write an absence excuse, then everything is fine. But for students whose parents can't, or won't do it -- and believe me, there are quite a few who just won't -- their child is left back, despite, in many cases, their ability to do the work.

I ask you: Does it make sense to retain, in particular an elementary student, sometimes two and three years because a parent doesn't live up to their responsibilities of writing an absence note? Who are we punishing? Who are we turning off to the educational system? Isn't there a better way to do this?

I can't stress enough the need for guidance counselors, pupil support staff teams, and programs for pregnant pupils that include child care. In a society that is rapidly changing, our youth of today face problems that we as teen-agers -- and that was not that long ago -- probably never even knew existed. The emotional demands placed on our children today by drugs, alcohol, divorce, single-parent families, and pregnancy, make learning a very low priority on our children's lists of things to accomplish. Passing the H.S.P.T. becomes inconsequential, when you are worrying about taking care of a family or surviving on the streets.

If we are to truly make a difference, we must offer the emotional support and guidance that our students need to succeed. This bill offers that chance. I think maybe what I find so discouraging is, I came here this afternoon from a Board budget hearing this morning, where I was told that some of the things that were being considered in order to reduce the taxpayers' burden, were the removal of the entire elementary guidance program, cutting child study teams, removing the pre-K program that currently exists, classroom aides, and a lot of the remedial, bilingual, and ESL programs, because the money has been cut. It is just not there.

All of our students must be guaranteed at least the same basic opportunities for an education if our public education system is going to be successful. For this very reason, this bill is a step in the right direction. It is a chance for the State of New Jersey to provide our children with equal educational opportunities, instead of just equal testing opportunities.

S-3125 would have a great impact on the Passaic school district, as well as the State of New Jersey. I urge its passage. I would be more than glad to answer any questions you may have.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Thank you very much. Are there any questions?

SENATOR ZIMMER: Yes, I have one.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Yes, Senator Zimmer?

SENATOR ZIMMER: What is the average class size in the Passaic schools?

MS. MICKOLAJCZYK: It depends if you average in all of the remedial teachers, or if you just take the class size. I know on our junior high school level, the class sizes exceed 30.

SENATOR ZIMMER: Give it to me both ways. What is the average with the remedial teachers?

MS. MICKOLAJCZYK: Well, we keep being told that we have low class sizes this year, but I would say the average is probably close to about 28 pupils per class -- between 25 and 28. It depends on the school. All of our schools are overcrowded, but some schools are less overcrowded than others.

SENATOR FELDMAN: You have made a dramatic comparison between Clifton -- your neighboring community -- and your own community of Passaic.

MS. MICKOLAJCZYK: Clifton is looking to close schools. We are looking for everywhere we can possibly find to put additional classes. It is a discouraging factor.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Thank you. Oh, I'm sorry. Senator Rice?

SENATOR RICE: Your classroom size is based on the facility construction. Is that correct?

MS. MICKOLAJCZYK: Basically, yes. Right now, we are looking for additional places to put classrooms.

SENATOR RICE: How old are your schools? Do you have any idea -- the average age?

MS. MICKOLAJCZYK: The average age? They vary. We have everything from a Catholic high school that we just took over about two years ago, in order to replace a facility that was over 110 years old, to our junior high school, which was built in the early 1900s. Our high school was built in 1955, but it has been totally overcrowded. They are not looking to add to it.

SENATOR RICE: But, the majority of your schools, relative to classroom space, whether high school or a grammar school-- They only have classroom capacity for so many, and that number is something less than 25 or so. Is that correct?

MS. MICKOLAJCZYK: Yes, I would say so. We are holding a lot of classes in hallways and backs of rooms.

SENATOR RICE: So, even the architects, years ago, dealt with certain populations, or someone in education recognized the need to keep classroom size to a minimum, when they first put up the buildings. I just wanted to try to identify where the problem is. Either way, there is a problem.

MS. MICKOLAJCZYK: Either way. The school that they just recently built in 1982, they are already adding onto, because it is inadequate as far as size is concerned. Our population really hasn't decreased. If anything, we have increased in the last several years.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Thank you. Bob Goodstein, Legislative Chairman, Alternate Education Association? Is Mr. Goodstein here? (no response)

Donna, it's good, if you have a statement prepared, to please give it to the hearing reporter, or to Dr. Schorr.

I take it Mr. Goodstein is not here, so we will go to the next witnesses, Jacqueline Dixon and Mary Joyner, as well as Mel Espinosa, representing the Paterson Interfaith Communities Organization. First will be Jacqueline Dixon, followed by Mary Joyner, and then Mr. Espinosa.

J A C Q U E L I N E D I X O N: (Ms. Dixon and her associates arrange a chart for use in their presentation) My name is Jacqueline Dixon. I represent PICO.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Have you copies of that -- copies of the chart?

MS. DIXON: No, we do not have copies.

M A R Y J O Y N E R: The PICO can get a copy for you.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Well, I think we should have it, as members of the Committee.

MS. JOYNER: We will see that you get that information.

MS. DIXON: We are speaking today on behalf of PICO -- the Paterson Interfaith Communities Organization -- to support the Education Reform Act of 1989. We want to thank Senator Feldman, Chairman of this Committee, for arranging the hearing in Paterson on this important legislation to set up minimum standards for class size, the number of guidance counselors, and requirements for special student services and programs. This legislation would upgrade education in every city in the State.

As we all know, education in New Jersey is a tale of two schools: On one hand, there are well-funded, suburban schools, and on the other hand, there are older, poorly equipped urban schools which have trouble preparing our children for a good job, a college education, or even life. The Reform Act of 1989 would go a long way to improve and guarantee a good education to every child -- no matter in what city or in what community he or she was born.

Against difficult odds, the people of Paterson are struggling to support the education of their children. As a matter of fact, people in Paterson struggle harder than most other people to provide a decent education for their children. The figures we will introduce today demonstrate why PICO is testifying in favor of the Education Reform Act which is before your Committee.

This chart -- it needs to be brought around, so that you can see the figures -- shows that in 1979, \$1765 was spent per child for education in Paterson. This was 65% of the \$2710 spent in nearby Bergen County. By 1988, Paterson was spending \$4527 per child, which was still only 74% of the \$6127 spent for education per child in Bergen County. The comparative school tax rates show it is not that the Paterson taxpayers don't try. We're actually taxing ourselves higher than most others to pay for the education of our children.

Please look at the chart again.

In 1980, the equalized school tax rate in Paterson was \$1.23. By 1988, to raise up their expenditures per pupil to \$4528, Paterson taxpayers increased their school tax rate 30% to \$1.61. But, over in Bergen County, while spending per child was going way up to \$6127 per child, the equalized school tax rate paid by the taxpayer actually fell by 38%. So, while we here in Paterson taxed ourselves to the bone to raise more money to help our children, our wealthier neighbors actually lowered their taxes 38%, and still they had \$1600 more per child to spend on education than we did.

In fact, you can plainly see on the chart that among Paterson, the State of New Jersey, and Bergen County, equalized school taxes fell everywhere except in Paterson, where we are doing everything we can to help our kids succeed.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER FROM AUDIENCE: What were the figures from Paterson you quoted, please?

SENATOR FELDMAN: Do you want to turn the chart around? What you are telling us here has been affirmed by the decision of Abbott v. Burke, that there is a disparity in this State between urban and the rest of the State. We have two school systems in this State, one for the urban centers, and the other for suburban. The figures certainly have been substantiated by the court decision of Abbott v. Burke, which says that we must give more money to urban education.

MS. JOYNER: Okay. Good afternoon. I am still speaking on behalf of PICO.

One more comparison illustrates once again how unfair the current system is to the hard-pressed taxpayers and our schools in Paterson.

In 1987, Englewood Cliffs spent \$9335 per pupil. In Paterson, we could only afford \$4528, which is only--

SENATOR FELDMAN: Please give us that figure again for Paterson, compared to Englewood Cliffs.

MS. JOYNER: Compared to Englewood Cliffs? Englewood Cliffs spent \$9335 per pupil. In Paterson, we could only afford \$4528, which is only 48% of what they spent in Englewood Cliffs. But, while we pay \$1.61 in school taxes, the equalized rate in Englewood Cliffs is an unbelievably low 34 cents. This isn't fair. We're paying taxes almost five times higher, but still for every one dollar they spend to educate their children, we have only 48 cents to educate ours.

What does this mean? It means that while around the State there are about 23 children in a classroom, in Paterson we have about 35 to 40 children crowded into a classroom. It means while children elsewhere have plenty of books to read and enjoy, many of the shelves in the libraries in our schools are bare. It means our teachers do not always have the supplies they need; that sometimes our schools are low on chalk, on paper, on pencils, on books. It means our children are not given the same chance to succeed that other children have in most of the other school districts around the State.

But, the picture isn't all bleak, because the people in Paterson continue to do everything they can to support the education of their children. PICO worked with every bank in this city, and joined with our churches, other companies, and community organizations, and with State Senator Frank Graves and Assemblymen John Girgenti and Bill Pascrell to create the PASS Plan. The PASS Plan -- the Passport Awarded for Staying in School Plan -- offers our young people concrete reasons to stay in school and graduate with a good education.

Through the PASS Plan, we are working with Passaic County Community College to provide pre-college training for junior high school students. We have guaranteed college tuition scholarships to high school graduates who meet high standards at Edward Williams College at Fairleigh Dickinson University and Bloomfield College. And we are working with the State Department of Higher Education to expand the PASS Plan to include college courses and a college environment for any parent of a child involved in several new activities encouraging whole families to learn together and to improve the education in our community.

In closing, we thank you for accepting our testimony this afternoon to support the Education Reform Act. We salute you and your efforts, Senator Feldman. On behalf of the PICO organization, thank you for taking a leadership role to meet the educational challenges facing the students and their families in our City of Paterson. Thank you very much.

SENATOR FELDMAN: You're welcome. Mr. Espinosa?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER FROM AUDIENCE: May I ask a question?

SENATOR FELDMAN: We will call for other witnesses. Questions from the panel first. If you want to direct a question through Senator Rice, you may, you know. Otherwise--

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER FROM AUDIENCE: Just the figures I want to know. (remainder of this statement indiscernible; speaker not near a microphone)

SENATOR FELDMAN: All right, yes.

MS. JOYNER: The organization is PICO -- Paterson Interfaith Communities Organization. (unidentified speaker speaks again; indiscernible to transcriber) You will have to direct your questions to the PICO organization. I'm sorry if you misunderstood me.

SENATOR FELDMAN: You want to know the source, is that right?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER FROM AUDIENCE: Right.

M E L E S P I N O S A: May I?

SENATOR FELDMAN: Yes, Mr. Espinosa.

MR. ESPINOSA: My name is Mel Espinosa. I am President of the Paterson Interfaith Communities Organization -- the PICO organization.

As the Senator pointed out, probably if we tried to expand on details of this kind at this time, it would probably make the hearing too lengthy. So I am just going to make kind of an ending statement to that, and then we may be able to answer a couple of questions, if that is okay. (indiscernible question from unidentified speaker in the audience)

SENATOR FELDMAN: Questions will be from the panel. If you will contact Dr. Schorr of the Committee, she will get you any figures or statistics you wish. I don't quarrel with these statistics. I think the State pays more, but this I am going to have to look into.

MR. ESPINOSA: There are four standards established for all school districts in the Education Reform Act which the PICO organization wants to especially highlight and applaud. We believe these goals set a standard which can help inner-city youngsters compete more effectively in college, in their jobs, and in their lives.

First, the maximum goal of 15 students per classroom to be phased in for all classes kindergarten through twelfth grade by the year 2000, is obviously an important goal. It has

been said here already that when 35 to 40 students are crowded together into small classrooms in the Paterson schools, education is very difficult for both the students and their teachers to accomplish.

Secondly, the target to provide one full-time guidance counselor for every 100 students would be an important step forward to help our children decide upon their own goals, both during and after they graduate from high school.

Thirdly, the commitment to establish alternative education programs for students who cannot be reached through the regular school programs is very important, especially in our community, where there are so many students with special needs.

And fourthly, provisions for in-service training for teachers in techniques and methods which are required to be successful in inner-city schools.

There is no question that the proposed legislation would be of tremendous benefit to the people, their children, and their schools in Paterson.

Thank you very much.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Thank you, Mr. Espinosa. Are there any questions? (no response) If not, I will call for our next witness, Eunice Kritsidmas, Union City Education Association. Do you live out in Bergen or Passaic County?

EUNICE KRITSIDMAS: No. I live in Middletown, New York. However, even though it is a long trip for me home, I plan on listening to the entire session, because it is very important for us.

SENATOR FELDMAN: But you are the immediate past President of the Union City Education Association?

MS. KRITSIDMAS: Yes, I was President from 1979 until 1987 of the Union City Education Association. During that time, of course, I was also a teacher -- a special teacher in English, as a second language, and I am still a teacher in the school system.

First, I would like to thank all of you for giving us this opportunity to speak before you. What I am going to say here is not only from my own perspective as a teacher, but also from the perspective of other teachers. When the original hearings were held by NJEA on urban education problems, I was President, and I sent out to all of my teachers a note asking them to please send me what they thought were the problems they saw within the schools, within their classrooms. So, what I am going to tell you today is not just my opinion, but that of all of my teachers as well.

I am only going to speak on some aspects of your bill, because your bill is a very comprehensive, and I think a very ambitious -- thank you -- bill which covers most of the problems we in the urban schools have.

First, our population in Union City. It's different. There is no question that our children are different. They are different from the children in Ho-Ho-Kus; they are different from the children in Upper Saddle River; they are different from the children in Clifton. Our population is not the same as those children. Over 74% of our children come from homes where English is not the native language. Our children come from homes that speak perhaps 30 or 40 different languages, with 30 or 40 different cultures, all within one city. This creates and brings with it many different problems; many different types of educational backgrounds; many different types of home lives.

Over 50% of our children are entitled to free lunch. This tells you something about the economics of our families. Most of them are very, very poor. Most of them are on welfare. They do not have the benefits that the children in suburban areas have. Our parents cannot provide for their children, the way the suburban parents can. We, the school, have to provide more for these children than the suburban areas, because the families provide less.

We have many single-parent families, but that is not unusual today. However, we also have multi-families -- multi-families living in one apartment of two or three or four rooms. Our children do not have a nice room to study in. They don't have a desk; they don't have privacy; they don't have quiet. They just have lots of other people and other children around them. They don't have the benefits that other children have.

We have a very transient population -- very transient. At the last hearing, one of the teachers had sent me a little note, and she said she had 31 new children in her class. Ladies and gentlemen; that means that she had 31 new children who had come in since September, because 31 children had come out. The majority of her class were all transient children. We don't have children that we can say are in our school system from kindergarten through twelfth grade. Our students may be in our school system one or two or three years, perhaps six months, maybe less, maybe more, and we have to deal with the fact that these children come from different school systems, different countries, different states, and they have different educational levels.

I have had many children this year who have come to me who are 14 or 15 years old. I teach in an elementary school, by the way. I have 14- and 15-year-olds who come to me who can't tell time; who can't read in their own language. How are we supposed to make these children literate in English, if they are illiterate in their own language? These are the problems we face in cities like Union City.

SENATOR FELDMAN: You would want to emphasize bilingual, or English as a second language? I mean--

MS. KRITSIDMAS: Fortunately, we do have a good "English as a second language" program in Union City. What we have are all of the diverse problems that so many other cities have, low income, and very poorly educated children coming to

us. In that respect, we do have a good ESL program and bilingual program, but we have many other problems to deal with.

For example, we have a few preschool programs -- a few preschool classes. They are not nearly sufficient for all the children who should be going to preschool. We have half-day kindergartens. You now have children who have come to us from other cultures or other countries, low socioeconomic groups, who have never attended preschool, who go to a half-day kindergarten. When they enter first grade, we expect them to learn to read and write and do math. It is impossible. They don't have the educational background; they don't have the concepts; they don't have the academics necessary to do that; and they don't have the support at home. So, these are the problems we face.

I just received two boys this year. This is not unusual. I am one teacher among 600. I can't be the only one who is getting these strange cases. I have two boys who came to me this year. They were separated from their parents 10 years ago. Ten years ago, the parents came to the United States to try to build a life for them. They settled in Union City. They have a small apartment that they share with somebody else, and they finally had enough money to bring these two boys -- actually, it's three children, but I have two -- to the United States. The boys are 14 and 15 years old, and they have not seen their parents in 10 years.

One of the portions of your bill calls for additional support services, with guidance counselors, with school psychologists, with school nurses, with social workers. These are so important to us, when you get children who have been separated from their families for so long, or when you get children who have come from places like Nicaragua or El Salvador, where they talk about, they couldn't go to school because people were shooting. These children and their families need the additional support services your bill is

asking for. They need kindergartens -- full-day kindergartens; they need the preschool programs, because it is the only education they are going to get. It is the only chance they are going to get. And that is why they came here, for that chance.

We need those learning disability people. We have good child study teams in Union City, and they work hard. But we do not have any extra. The only way these children will get to see these child study teams, is if we send them for evaluation for possible referral. But the children who aren't going to be referred, who also need those services, cannot receive them because we just don't have them to give, and they need them desperately.

Let me just talk a little bit now about our learning/teaching conditions. We have large class sizes. How many of you have ever spent a day confined to a room with 25 five-year-olds, with no aide in the room? You would not come back the next day, I guarantee it. I would suggest that anyone who says that class size is not important, be asked to substitute in a school with 30 sixth-graders, and be there all day long, with probably no preps, because our specials are being reduced, and our substitutes are disappearing, and they are in there all day long. They wouldn't come back after the second day. They'd never last the week.

Senator, ask these people to go to a school and substitute in one of those classes, and see what they tell you then about class size not making a difference. You can't individualize. You can't sit there all morning. You have three different reading groups. You are working with one reading group, and the other two groups are working by themselves. Well, how are those other two groups going to work by themselves? If they have reading difficulties, if they have math difficulties, if they have language problems, what are you going to give them to do while you work with one group, and you

have 20 other kids sitting somewhere else? Are you going to give them dittos to color? That doesn't work, Senator. That is not an education.

We need substitutes desperately. Granted, we have the same problem many of the school districts have. We can't get substitutes, and when we do get substitutes, they are not people who are qualified. They are people who are looking for a job to make a few dollars. They are not people who are dedicated to education. I must say, those of us who are in education, and stay in it, do it because we are dedicated.

Substitute teachers are difficult to find. We have practically none. What happens when we don't get a substitute and a teacher is absent? One of three things -- actually one of two: The class is split. That means that a teacher who already has 25 or 30 children in her class now gets another 10 in her class, who are not on the same reading level, or any other level she has, who she now has to try to give busy work to. In effect, those 10 children-- Don't let anyone tell you, "Well, they are with a teacher, so they are getting schooling." They're not, because it is impossible for her to give those additional 10 or 12 children attention as she would the children in her class.

The other solution that most of the schools find if they don't have a substitute is, they will take teachers from the special programs. They will take a teacher who teaches English as a second language, which means that my kids don't get English that day. Or, they will take the remedial reading teacher, which means that those kids don't get remedial reading that day. Or, they will take one of the special teachers, like the gym teacher, which means that the kids who would have gym don't get gym. In addition, the teacher who would have had gym and would have had a preparation period now loses her preparation period. There is no solution to this, other than that we must have substitute teachers who are on a contractual

basis, who have certification, who will come into our schools and teach our children when we are absent.

I noticed in your bill that some of the sections under curriculum were called "enrichment." I cannot say that learning computers, that gym, that art, that music, that any of those subjects are enrichment. Our children have no other way of getting any of these areas of education except in school. Their parents cannot send them to a gym or a swimming pool or the local country club for exercise or swimming classes. They cannot send them to a music teacher to learn music or appreciation of music. They cannot send them to a school down at the corner with a teacher who will teach them a little bit of art. All of these subjects-- The only place our children are going to learn them, if they are to learn them, is in our schools. I think we have to do it for them.

We're drowning in paperwork, Senator. We have so much paperwork, that we are being taken away from our classes in order to get it done. Your bill also calls for clerks and aides to do some of our paperwork. It does not do our children any good for us to spend hours filling out papers, because we are taking that time away from them. We need clerks or aides to do that work.

Now, there are two things that your bill does not talk about, and I think I do have to speak on them. The first one is, your bill does not speak to our antiquated facilities, which Senator Rice has spoken about. The newest building we have in Union City-- The principal just retired from that school, and he was over 65. He went to that school as an elementary school student. The school I work in used to be a cheese factory at the turn of the century. We work in it. We have a school. We don't care what it used to be. Right now, it is a school, and that is what we are doing -- we're teaching our kids. But when you have schools where the kids have to come in all bundled up because the windows all leak, or where

they have to move out of particular classrooms because the building leaks when it rains, it makes education very difficult -- very difficult. It is hard for us to teach.

The second thing I would like to speak about is another bill which is presently in the Assembly. I found it in one of the brochures. I don't know what its status is. However, it does talk to-- The reason I am speaking to you about it is because I don't know if it has come to the Senate, or whether it will in the future, but I think you should also consider it. That is the bill that speaks about recalling board members for just cause. (laughter and applause) I just touched a nerve, I can see that.

Union City is in Hudson County, but I don't think the situation is peculiar to Hudson County. I think many boards of education, many districts have the problems that Union City has, and has had for many years dealing with board members. I don't know what "just cause" is defined as in that Assembly bill. I only noticed it, and it caught my eye. I think board members should be responsible to: a) be very knowledgeable in school law; b) understand the workings of the schools which they are supposed to serve; and c) have no personal interests in promoting particular people or parts of education for their own personal benefit.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Does Union City elect, or do you appoint? Since you are a city, they usually appoint.

MS. KRITSIDMAS: They have been elected for many years. However, when they are appointed, or when they are elected, the priorities of the board members do not change in most instances. The priorities of many board members are not education, Mr. Senator, and they should be. I think our Legislature should hold them accountable for that.

SENATOR FELDMAN: May I make this comment? Number one, in your addition to your statement, you question the school facilities we have today, saying something should be

done. Well, something has been done just this past week. The Senate Education Committee -- we -- released two bills: one, a \$200 million bond issue -- general obligation bond; the second is a revolving door concept, where a community can borrow money from that bond issue, pay interest, and then replace the money so someone else may borrow.

So, at least we have taken a long step forward. The same bill was in two years ago, but the Governor, in his wisdom -- infinite wisdom, because he's Teflon; he can do nothing wrong -- vetoed that bill. We are giving it another try. We know how important it is. You said it so vividly and movingly. You cannot educate a child with decaying walls or a ceiling that is crumbled or may fall down on that youngster or with surroundings that are worse than what they have at home, and even at home, it is nothing to be proud of.

So we do know that a good environment is important to the learning process.

MS. KRITSIDMAS: Yes. We have to give them a better place to come to than what they have at home. At present, some of our schools are not necessarily that. My kids have the greatest fun when the paint chips off the ceiling, playing with it on the desks. It's great, you know.

I would like to end by saying, we do have an obligation to provide a comprehensive and meaningful education to all of our students. I take exception to the Assemblyman before, who said we should not mandate many of these portions of the bill. Our boards of education, unless they are mandated and told that they must do something, will not do it. The only way to get decent education in our schools, is by mandating it. I hope -- I really hope that you gentlemen will have the courage to do so.

Thank you so much. (applause)

SENATOR FELDMAN: I think we will take you, and others, with us as we go around the State speaking for the bill.

Senator Ewing, did you want to say something?

SENATOR EWING: Yes. Eunice, I think you make an excellent presentation. But what interests me is what has been troubling your board of education? Why didn't they put up new buildings? You said you were discouraged with the board of education. If it is an elected board, what is wrong with the voters, then, because in New Jersey we have a very strong -- rightly or wrongly -- home rule concept? You were saying it is up to the Legislature to come into places like Union City, which does not have the greatest of governments, because you certainly hear of its problems. You know, it can't all be put on our shoulders, if you want home rule. Now, if you want the State to move in, that is something different. Certainly Jersey City is taking a million dollars out of their budget to fight the State from taking over a corrupt educational system. It stinks up there in Jersey City. Now, what your government is like in Union City, I don't really know, but I don't think it's a lot better.

But, where were the citizens in not demanding that you go on a lease/purchase arrangement? That's been in the law for three years. You could have put a building up without going to a referendum.

MS. KRITSIDMAS: Union City has a very high tax base now. Your local homeowner with a small house-- I live in the country. You asked where I live. I live in Middletown, New York. The lots in Union City are smaller than what I plant as a garden each year, and their tax rates run \$4000 and \$5000 a year. On that basis, how can they possibly put up a building?

SENATOR EWING: Forty-five thousand?

MS. KRITSIDMAS: Four to five thousand dollars -- \$4000 to \$5000 a year for a small, one-family house in Union City. That's incredible.

SENATOR EWING: Yeah, but on a lease/purchase--

MS. KRITSIDMAS: And their taxes have been going up every year. Where is it going to go?

SENATOR EWING: What are they doing with the money at the local level? Come on.

MS. KRITSIDMAS: I don't have access to the records of the municipality, Senator.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Senator Ewing has just made a plea for accountability. If we want accountability, we have to watch our elected officials.

Senator Rice?

SENATOR RICE: This is not really a question, but you articulated so well, and the information you provided I think was so excellent, that I just wanted to thank you. You indicated that we should have the courage. We have the courage. The others may not have it, but we have the courage. That is why I'm glad that I am a co-sponsor of this legislation. We will fight the battle, and try to win the wars as they come and they go. See, I fought in Vietnam. We lost, but we fought the battle.

I can assure you that we have heard what you have said. I also heard Senator Ewing make some very valid points, based on what you said about the school board. We have school board problems in Newark. What I found out is, the State gives you two choices -- type one or type two. I hate both of them, but you have to live with what you have. There are some of us in Newark who are going to get involved in this election. You know, no one gives us these things. I think the people in Union City, like the people in Newark, recognize that unless the State system is willing to address that problem, not talk about it, not facade it, then we, the people, are going to have to take away the power that we have put into some folks' hands.

So, we have the courage here. I just hope the other 100-plus in Trenton have the courage to support this legislation.

MS. KRITSIDMAS: I hope so, too. Thank you.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Thank you very much. Have a good safe trip home.

We have two concluding witnesses who have asked to testify. If any of you -- after I call these two witnesses -- wish to add something that hasn't been said -- pro or con -- you are welcome. The concluding witnesses, who have requested to speak, are Waheedoh Muhammad. Is she here? (affirmative response) Yes. And Kabili Tayari? (affirmative response) But you're separate, you're not-- I mean, you didn't come in together?

WAHEEDOH MUHAMMAD: No, we didn't.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Okay.

MS. MUHAMMAD: My name is Waheedoh Muhammad. First of all, as a parent, I thank God for the opportunity to thank you gentlemen for coming forward and being the forerunner for this bill. I want to say to you that we, as parents, are ready, willing, and able to do whatever you deem necessary to help you in this battle.

We want to also say, as Governor Kean so proudly says in his TV ad, with reference to a million dollars a day going into education-- I would like to see some of that money really for education. I don't know where a million dollars a day goes, but I can assure you that it does not go into the City of Paterson. Although I would like to agree with the figures that were given before, I can assure you that Paterson does not spend \$4500 per pupil -- not in this city.

Also, I would like to say, about the rainy day fund that the Governor also spoke about-- You, as legislators-- I would like to see a breakdown of where this rainy day fund money is supposed to be, and what it is supposed to be for. Evidently, no one knows there is a flood in Paterson.

Let me say this lastly: What I want to know from you now is, what is the next step after the last hearing? I know

there is supposed to be another hearing take place. Then what is the process after that?

SENATOR FELDMAN: There will be four hearings all together. After the fourth hearing, this Committee then will evaluate what has been said. All of this testimony is being recorded and will be transcribed. We will have a meeting. The bill will be on the table. By that time, we hope to have the fiscal note that the sponsor and the Committee Chairman have requested. Then we will deliberate, and the Committee will make its decision. It may be part of the bill; it may be the entire bill. We will have to take into consideration the cost. But the important thing is, we are starting a dialogue today that has never been started before. We cannot run away from the realities of quality education in this State. We take a great deal of pride in the fact that we are beginning something that should have been begun, perhaps, a decade ago.

MS. MUHAMMAD: Yes, exactly. And, as the PTSA President here at Rosa Park, I want to say "welcome." Thank you very much.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Our next witness will be Mr. Kabili Tayari. Please present yourself to the Committee.

K A B I L I T A Y A R I: My name is Kabili Tayari. I first want to start off by saying that I am 38 years of age, and have been involved with working with parents ever since I was 23. I am glad that Ms. Waheedoh Muhammad said what she did. I want to say, people like Waheedoh Muhammad represent the kind of parents on the State level, and on the national level, who are not only involved with their children and fighting for education, but are articulate and understand the issues, because the day is long overdue.

We are tired of hearing the rhetoric that parents are not concerned; parents are giving the responsibility to the schools; parents don't care about their children; parents are not aware; parents are not concerned; and parents are not

dedicated. What has happened for too long is, the elected officials, the boards of education, the educators, and many other people have not gone to the parents who are conscious, informed, involved, articulate, and ready to organize, and who can fight for their children.

On the question of whether or not the boards of education are liquidating their responsibilities, I, for one, will say that in many cases, as Senator Rice has stated -- Newark, Jersey City, and many other places, like Westfield, New Jersey-- Nobody talks about Westfield, which was in the paper for squandering their Chapter 'I' moneys. That made headlines. But look at whose community that is. Then we can understand why what is not publicized.

Yes, there are many corrupt things happening in Jersey City, but there is something in the New Jersey Department of Education, my friends, that is called the Bureau of Facilities. Now, let us deal with the Bureau of Facilities while we talk about what the young woman from Union City talked about. Asbury Park, New Jersey: Their voters passed a resolution to build new schools in their district. You can find this out for a fact. The year was 1985, one year before the State takeover plan was announced.

The New Jersey Department of Education's Bureau of Facilities denied Asbury Park the money to build their new schools, Senator Ewing. That is what is happening also with the bureaucracy that takes place in the State of New Jersey. You must begin to examine the Bureau of Facilities.

Let's deal with another case in point. When we talk about needed facilities, in Newark, New Jersey -- a case in point -- there is a school, the Harriet Tubman School, that is more than 100 years old. The Board of Education and the principal and the parents have applied to the Bureau of Facilities for money. So we need to deal with the fact that this bill -- S-3125 -- is needed, and included in there must be the question of facilities.

What I want to deal with very critically, though, because I just had to respond to some of the things I heard said-- Sometimes, although you may be elected officials, you, like I, can be ignorant about certain things, so I just needed to bring that intelligence to you today, so you can do further research.

The Robinson v. Cahill case, and the Abbott v. Burke case show that the bill -- S-3125 -- is long overdue. Jesse Jackson testified in 1986 in Jersey City, New Jersey at the high school. I'm sorry, 1987. He said: "Quality education, plus equity, equals a thorough and efficient education." Senate Bill 3125 is beginning to address the question of not just thorough and efficient in Abbott v. Burke, but it is beginning to address uniting quality with equity, thereby providing every child with a thorough and efficient education.

We must ask the germane question here today: Why is it that in Livingston, New Jersey, where Governor Kean lives, in Chatham, New Jersey, where the Commissioner of Education lives, places like Bernardsville, New Jersey, where the average home is \$300,000 and above, and places like Millburn and Short Hills, New Jersey, that every child receives a quality education -- every child? There are very few, or no private schools, but there are private-public schools.

In Cherry Hill, New Jersey, schools are closing. In Camden, New Jersey, schools are overcrowded because of high enrollment. They are closing in Cherry Hill because of low enrollment. Someone is introducing something called "choice," and telling us to send our children to Cherry Hill. I commend you Senators who are supporting S-3125, for understanding that the only choice is quality education for every child. The same quality education that is given in Livingston should be given in Paterson and Jersey City.

The bill demands building human beings without developing expensive societal problems with prisons. We don't

need any more prisons; we need new schools. We need to deal with the fact also that in parochial schools-- Public school districts buy the books for the parochial schools. I know, because I taught in one. The public school systems also buy and pay for the remedial education of the parochial school children. If you don't believe it, look at the Chapter I programs. The public school system also pays for the storage fees of books and other supplies that the parochial schools use, and that the public schools buy.

I am saying all of these things because I think Senate Bill 3125 is something we need to look at comprehensively. Senator Feldman, you, I think, chaired the SLERP Commission. You did a very good study and analysis in the SLERP Commission. The SLERP Commission called for an overhaul of the tax system in our State. I think, again, that by supporting Ronald Rice's bill, we have gone past the rhetoric of thorough and efficient, full funding, recommendations of the SLERP Commission, and the NJEA challenge, and we are calling for a comprehensive quality education for every child in the State of New Jersey.

We need a curriculum. Without mandates, the State Board of Education, the State Department of Education, local boards of education, and county superintendents are not going to make sure that the children in Paterson, Penns Grove, Carneys Point, Camden, Bridgeton, Vineland, and Jersey City receive a thorough and efficient education.

I am here to say that we support S-3125. We will continue to support S-3125, fight for it, and as the young brothers in the community would say, "Take it to the hoop." We'll be there. (applause)

SENATOR FELDMAN: When you say "we," which is very encouraging, do you represent any--

MR. TAYARI: Oh, yes, sir. Let me first of all say, I am a Region II Steering Committee member for the National

Title I, Chapter I program, which represents the State of New Jersey, the State of New York, and Puerto Rico. I am also very actively involved with working with the Newark Board of Education, not as an employee, but working with the Newark Board of Education and the Jersey City Board of Education in trying to provide a thorough and efficient education. Your Senator Ron Rice can testify to that.

Again, thank you very much.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Thank you very much.

SENATOR EWING: I would like to ask Deena Schorr -- she is a staff member from OLS -- does the Bureau of Facilities have money to hand out to schools?

DR. SCHORR: No. The Bureau of Facilities Planning just approves permits and the like. There was an emergency program, but that has all been expended or promised.

SENATOR EWING: They have no money to give out. You said they were turned down.

MR. TAYARI: Excuse me. Let me repeat myself: In 1985, the voters of Asbury Park voted for new schools. When they applied for whatever bureaucratically and procedurally they needed for permission from the Bureau of Facilities in order to build, they did not receive that permission. The Harriet Tubman School in Newark, before it had an elected board of education, under the appointed board system, received the same treatment. That is a fact, and homework will prove that I am speaking knowledgeably about what I am stating. Thank you.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Well, that is a fitting benediction to this long, but very productive hearing. Yes? Two more speakers?

A N N A T A L I A F E R R O: I would like to pose a question to you. May I?

SENATOR FELDMAN: Yes, you may come up and speak as others have done. Please give your name, as well as your organization, if you represent an organization.

MS. TALIAFERRO: My name is Anna Taliaferro. I come representing many organizations, so I will just dismiss that because I am involved totally with education, both on the job and off the job.

First, I had no intention of coming here to speak, because I think everyone has been quite eloquent, especially those who support your bill, and I will support it wholeheartedly. I applaud all of you Senators for having the courage to come forward to present this kind of legislation.

My questions are-- I learned this from being in Title I when we were in Washington receiving many of the workshop presentations that were given. We know that language plays a very important part. In reading the statements from your bill, perhaps when you are taking a look at this bill again, you will not say "shall be," but "must be adhered to."

My other question is, I am a former president of a vocational-technical high school. While being the parent/president of the organization, the county superintendent sat on the board of education. When many issues that were critical to our youngsters would come up, he could not vote on them. I would like to challenge you to take a look at that, because the laws, as I believe they are, say that a county superintendent must sit on that board of education. How can he, or she, sit on that board of education and not be able to vote on -- they must abstain -- many of the educational issues that come up?

SENATOR FELDMAN: If he is ex officio, he doesn't have to vote. But we will check into the statute on that particular question.

MS. TALIAFERRO: I don't have any problem with that person being ex officio, but he is sitting there as a voting member, which means that sometimes we are deadlocked, because there are only five members on that board. Sometimes they are deadlocked on issues that are critical to our children.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Which board are you referring to?

MS. TALIAFERRO: I am referring to vocational education boards.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Throughout the State?

MS. TALIAFERRO: Yes, indeed.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Again, I think if one is on as ex officio-- That is not a voting member. He is there perhaps to--

MS. TALIAFERRO: No, no, he sits on there as--

SENATOR FELDMAN: We will check into that.

MS. TALIAFERRO: Okay.

SENATOR FELDMAN: I am not going to be presumptuous enough to give you a categorical answer now, because I really don't know. It has to be checked into. I think we did have some bills-- Yes, Deena?

DR. SCHORR: Yes, the county superintendent does sit on the board.

MS. TALIAFERRO: Yes, he is a voting member.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Then, how can he abstain?

DR. SCHORR: There is legislation to take him off.

SENATOR EWING: Is it a county vocational school board?

MS. TALIAFERRO: Yes, the county vocational school boards.

Lastly, I would like to say, from a very bright gentleman who we lost far too quickly, whose name was Ron Edmunds, out of New York, the author of "Effective Schools--" He said: "Schools will educate those they need to, and those they don't, they won't." Remember that.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Thank you very much. Senator Zimmer?

SENATOR ZIMMER: I just want to respond to that last comment. I think we have always needed to educate everybody from an ethical point of view. Now, business realizes it has to educate everybody from an economic point of view. We have what is described as a labor shortage, when in fact we have a tremendous waste of resources in the children who are not getting a decent education to supply the labor force.

MS. TALIAFERRO: Right. I would just, in answer perhaps to some of the background that you don't know-- This is a city that for years took school board moneys to offset taxes. So, it has not been an educational city. And yes, we parents are watching, even the President of the United States, who says he is, "the education President. Read my lips." We come from a background where we say, "Put your money where your mouth is," and "Actions speak louder than words." We want more than just lip service.

In realizing that there is a myth out there-- If I recall Dr. George McKenna, who was a very able educator in California, when he was being questioned by Ted Koppel-- The myth perceived out here in many of the communities is that urban communities do not care about their youngsters. The question was posed to Dr. McKenna: "When do you give up on children?" Dr. McKenna responded by saying: "Never, but never, do you give up on your most precious resource. Had it been your child, Mr. Koppel, you would not have ever talked about giving up."

Thank you.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Senator Ewing, you're coming back for encore after encore. Now--

SENATOR EWING: I believe I am right in saying that the county vocational school boards are made up of five individuals, plus the superintendent. So, if there was a tie vote, maybe one--

MS. TALIAFERRO: The superintendent does not have voting powers on that board.

SENATOR EWING: I know that. He does not have voting powers. There are five other members.

MS. TALIAFERRO: Right.

SENATOR EWING: So evidently, there must have been somebody missing if there was a tie vote. Even though he is sitting there, he is not allowed to vote, but the other five

members were not all there. Maybe there were only four of them, so it was a two to two vote. You said there was some--

MS. TALIAFERRO: If the county superintendent abstains and does not vote, then you have four members left.

SENATOR EWING: No, no, there are meant to be five other members, I believe.

MS. TALIAFERRO: Not on the county boards.

SENATOR EWING: Are there only five?

MS. TALIAFERRO: There are only five.

SENATOR EWING: Not six?

MS. TALIAFERRO: No, no, unless we are unique in Passaic County.

SENATOR EWING: Lord knows what happens up here.

SENATOR FELDMAN: That's the last word. The last witness will be Lottie Bell. May I apologize? Inadvertently, the slip your name was on was misplaced.

L O T T I E B E L L: My name is Lottie Bell. I live at 151 Sherman Street, in the City of Passaic. I represent the Sherman Street Block Association and the United Passaic Organization.

This bill is long overdue, and it could be an answer to our prayers in the City of Passaic. The reason why is, our schools need many more resources as are required by this bill. Basic skills instruction: We need more basis skills teachers, and communication between the basic skills teachers and the regular teachers in the classrooms.

We need to have our gifted and talented program expanded throughout our school district. Some books are desperately needed. Some of our books are outdated. Some of our children have no books at all. Our libraries do not have adequate material. They need more books and videos.

We need full-time, qualified staffing. If we want to make sure that more of our children learn the basics of math, reading and writing, they will need more individual attention.

This means that we need smaller class sizes, equally in the early grades. This is so important in Passaic. Our schools, yes, are bursting at the seams.

Also, each school in our district badly needs full-time assistant officers to cut down absenteeism. A lot of that burden falls on the principal and the vice principal of the district -- the principal and our vice principal, who have many other important duties. This bill would provide additional funds to our district to take these important steps. It states for each school year: "Each district shall receive an amount of State aid equal to the additional courses required by this Act."

If we look at the facts, we can see why this additional State aid is so important. We have looked at the auditor's report of the school districts for 1986-'87. They tell a story as to why some school districts are all ready to provide these exceptional educational services, and why others are not. Let's look at the per pupil spending on day school in the local districts during 1986-'87: Passaic, \$3125 per pupil was spent during the school year; compared to Wayne, \$4479 per pupil. This means that Wayne spends 30% more on each student than the City of Passaic. In Bergen County, \$5133. This is \$2000 a year more per student. Bergen County spends 40% more.

While money is not the solution to all of our educational problems, it is certainly vital to providing the kinds of service and attention which this bill calls for. Let's see how the current differences in school spending translate into staffing in these local school districts: In the Passaic schools, there were 66 employees per 1000 school children. This includes teachers, administrators, and child study team personnel. In the community of Wayne, there were 93 employees per 1000 children. No wonder the children in Wayne, and Bergen County communities, are doing better on test scores.

In Bergen County, there was an average of 94 employees per 1000 children. Children are doing better on test scores, and advancing to better colleges, better jobs. From these statistics, we can see that they have smaller classes, more support services, and receive much more individual attention. Let's give the students from the cities like Passaic a fair chance. If we invest in our students when they are young, we will see results in our adults. This is really very simple.

This bill can make the difference. I urge all of you to please support it. Thank you.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Thank you, Ms. Bell. This concludes the first of our hearings.

Oh, I'm sorry. There is someone else who wishes to say something. While he is coming up, Senator Rice, we are making history here with your bill, at our first public hearing. I want to thank Senators Ewing and Zimmer for being here, and special thanks to the Board of Education of Paterson for making us feel so much at home. To have teacher representatives here made it more enjoyable and pleasurable.

Now, I will turn it over to you, as our last witness.

R E V E R E N D B R I A N L. C A R T E R:
(malfunctioning machine caused loss of approximately two sentences during this 'witness' testimony) This bill is a remarkable achievement to this point. The reality, however, is that the passage of this bill is critical to the survival of the educational system in New Jersey. If we are able to educate one child with quality education, then we should be able to educate all children with a quality education. The facts remain, however, that we are not doing that.

I pastor in Paterson; I happen to live in Maplewood, which has one of the better educational systems, not only in the State of New Jersey, but in the country. One of the significant reasons for that is that upwards of 80% of the property tax dollar that I pay goes into education.

One of the things you find where there is a quality education system-- People who have children in an educational system that is not as good seem to get their children into the better systems. If this legislation does not pass, if this bill is not enacted, you will have to deal with the problem of falsification of addresses. There are many people today who are falsifying their address so as to get their children from within their district into other districts, or communities, where the school system is perceived to be more efficient.

When you begin to talk about young children -- kindergarten and grades one, two, and three -- and learning, you find there is very little difference in the educational development of children in urban and suburban areas -- at the early stages of education. However, you find that the gap widens as those children get older. There is a significant reason for that, and the reason is often resources -- resources of personnel and resources of materials.

Children cannot learn when the environment is not conducive to learning. It is critical that we provide for young children an environment that makes learning a pleasure. Those people who go on to higher education-- It is not necessarily those who are the smartest, but those who were taught to enjoy education the most. As you enjoy learning-- There is a very profound psychological principle: That which gives us pleasure, we gravitate towards. That which causes us pain, we run away from.

As you create greater enjoyment in the educational experience for young children, the greater their thirst for learning becomes. That thirst carries them deeper and deeper into the educational process, so that they become not only functionally literate, but they are able to make significant contributions to the society in which we live.

You cannot provide an environment of enjoyment in a decaying building. You cannot provide enjoyment in a building

that is cold. You cannot provide enjoyment in a building where a classroom has 30 or 35 children in it. At a young age, it is very important that the child has the psychological support in that classroom that is needed to make him or her feel important, to have a healthy self-image, and a sense of self-esteem. No one teacher can do that for a child when the class size is 30 or 35, or even 25. They cannot pay the attention to that individual student that he or she needs to help with the self-worth. You will find that most children will fail and drop out of the educational system, not because of intellect, not because of intellectual deficiency, but because of a self-esteem that has been damaged by inattention or an environment that was not conducive to healthy learning.

The urban centers do not have the tax base to support quality education. When you look around the State of New Jersey, you find that those communities which enjoy quality education are those communities which have the tax base to do it. The urban centers do not have that tax base. Consequently, funding is necessary from the State level. It is not an option you have. You have a responsibility -- a constitutional responsibility -- to provide quality education for every child. It can only be achieved by appropriate funding.

I did not plan to speak today, but I sat and I listened to the State Department of Education speak, and it troubled me, because I wonder when bureaucratic concern will give way to the concern of quality education for every child. To stand and say that mandating is not necessary, is to overlook the core of the problem. When you have crisis-- Crisis cannot be reversed by good will, because those who are comfortable do not understand the discomfort of the uncomfortable. Those who are uncomfortable are usually powerless to do anything about their discomfort. You can only bring about parity and balance by mandate, and hopefully when

the day comes that the system reaches that point, we may be able to relax the mandate. But if we are going to stop and reverse the disparity and the crisis-- This Committee must stand for mandating. You must be courageous enough to say: "Mandating is necessary," because without mandating your pleas and your efforts will be futile.

There is one other point I have to make this afternoon. When you put taxes and resources together and you provide an environment that is healthy, then you will begin to educate the total being, for education, as one officer says, is more than the pursuit of a certain course of study. Rather, it is the harmonious development of the mental, physical, and spiritual powers, preparing people for work here, now, and also to make greater contributions to society as they grow and develop.

Senators, ladies and gentlemen, this piece of legislation that you propose needs your commitment, not your political survival. I thank you. (applause)

SENATOR RICE: Mr. Chairman, before we leave--

SENATOR FELDMAN: You may conclude, Ronnie.

SENATOR RICE: Fine. Reverend Carter -- I don't know if you can hear me; I am trying to get on tape-- It is Reverend Carter, is that correct?

REVEREND CARTER: Yes.

SENATOR RICE: Let me first of all say to you-- You indicated that you pastor in the City of Paterson?

REVEREND CARTER: Yes.

SENATOR RICE: Okay, and you live in Maplewood?

REVEREND CARTER: Yes.

SENATOR RICE: I would walk out my back door and be in your city. I hope very much that you, as an individual -- one who comes from a spiritual background also, a Christian background -- will be one of those in the forefront wherever you go to articulate the need for this concept of education reform.

You indicated that you were not going to speak. Being a minister, you know that God did call you. I would hope that when you get in an audience in the future, that you won't hesitate, because, you see, there are so many people in our society who understand the need, but cannot articulate, cannot make those of us who oftentimes forget where we came from, because of our own academic skills and backgrounds and professions, understand that need. See, when you come out of Maplewood -- and I come out of Newark -- and you can come forth and talk about the needs of a system like Newark, which your system really doesn't have to share in, you are very much correct. That is the kind of comparison we need. It is rough for me, coming out of Newark with so many problems, to talk to other legislators who may not have ever witnessed the kinds of problems we have. They have different life styles, etc. It is hard for them to understand that it is not advice; it is a reality. When someone like you, coming from that kind of a background, and saying, "Look, my system is one of the best around. The tax base is solid. But this is the correct thing to do--" People will say, "I think it is very important."

Please continue to speak up.

SENATOR FELDMAN: And may the message go out throughout all the churches of the State. You can be the catalyst.

REVEREND CARTER: I have had the unique opportunity of seeing both systems. My reason for not speaking this afternoon, initially, was because I had planned on coming to Trenton to make my presentation there, which I will probably still do.

One of the mistakes we must not make in this proposal here is, we cannot make this a suburban versus urban battle, because a careful analysis of educational trends in New Jersey will show you that the problems which have been rampant in the urban centers for quite a while are beginning to manifest

themselves in the suburban areas of the State. This legislation is needed across the State.

If I may talk about Maplewood for a minute, we are now facing an overcrowding problem in the elementary schools, and there is a great debate, "Well, do we do five, six, seven, and eight, one through four, or K through 4?" That is the great debate that is going on there now. The problem of class size is not unique to the urban centers. It is a problem that needs to be addressed because we have left the educational system to decay for too long. Facilities have not been upgraded; facilities have not been created. The need for substitute teachers is not an urban/suburban problem. It is a problem of the educational system.

There are those of your colleagues who will try to make this an urban problem, because: One, we have come to a point in our society-- We have come to a political climate where people are no longer concerned about those in a disadvantaged position. There is a feeling that, "Well, the Supreme Court has rolled back affirmative action here; it has rolled it back there. We don't need to do anything for those people." That's wrong. The reality is, if we don't educate our young people, we will spend money in reforming them, and we cannot afford to do that.

And yes, my commitment is to speak of the need for quality education, be it from the pulpit or out of the pulpit. The church I pastor boasts a very large educational system throughout the country. But the parochial school cannot pick up all the slack. We can only take some. The fact of the matter is, the education of the masses can only be accomplished and achieved through a strong and viable public school system.

SENATOR FELDMAN: Reverend, may I once again invite you to Trenton on February 23. I will put you on first. I

want to make sure that the Commissioner is there, and other people from the Department of Education.

This hearing is adjourned. Thank you very much.

(HEARING CONCLUDED)