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Sen. Charles Ford, R-Tulsa, went head-to-head with Williams early on, attempting to insert his own mid-term funding solution into the bill. The issue of chargeables quickly became the issue topping debate.

According to Ford, schools qualify for funding after reaching a point of two percent growth in student enrollment, or twenty new students, whichever is less. "This bill returns to the pre-1989 law," he said. "It allows schools to recapture those students."

With a vote of 28 to 17, the Ford amendment was tabled.

"I think our plan is the best on the table right now because it places the most emphasis on the classrooms in all of our public schools," Williams said. He said his mid-term funding solution is based on funding of school districts' needs and not on enrollment figures.

Of the approximately \$101 million in common education funding proposed in the governor's executive budget, \$48 million is proposed for mid-term funding, which would only affect a handful of the state's schools, Williams said. Only \$3.1 million of budgeted funds would affect schools statewide. "We want to invest money directly into the classroom where it will do the most good," he said.

Don Williams said Oklahoma only funds its schools at 75 percent of the national average. Even with the state's low cost of living taken into account, the numbers still rest at about 85 percent. "SB1100 won't put us in the top 10 immediately, but it will be a substantial step forward."

Saying she supported other of the measure's initiatives, Sen. Penny Williams, D-Tulsa, disagreed with mid-term funding language, saying it should be dealt with in a separate measure. "I do not think this mid-term funding solution should be in this bill," she said. "If we put technical problems and solutions in this bill and say they are for educational improvements, we are kidding ourselves." She did, however, say she thought the measure had "some real chance for reform."

Penny Williams supported an earlier amendment by Sen. Grover Campbell, R-Owasso, that attempted to remove the language all together. The amendment ultimately failed.

"I will personally ask the governor to veto this measure on the basis of school funding," said Senate GOP Leader Gerald "Ged" Wright, R-Broken Arrow. "It's not right, it's not equitable, and it's not the right thing to do."

Wright called the measure unfair. "The children in these school districts should not be forced to suffer when other communities are receiving more than their fair share," he said, claiming under the measure, growing school districts will be penalized for additional property tax revenue. "As I have said before, I don't know of any parent who would let their child go hungry if there was more than enough money for food, and that is just what the Democrats are doing."

"This is not a perfect bill," said Sen. Maxine Horner, D-Tulsa. "The time to do something for education is now."

Despite dissenting votes from 12 Republicans and 5 Democrats, the measure and its emergency clause, passed with a vote of 27 to 17. Don Williams filed a motion to reconsider, allowing the measure to be heard again within three legislative days.

Other amendments to the bill include the repeal of current law relating to AIDS and sex education in schools, language addressing possession of firearms by students, use of school property by the district and a section allowing the American flag to be flown in classrooms.

The bill now goes to the House.

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## HOUSE HEARS DEBATE OVER AMENDMENT TO SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET ACT

By Heather Myers  
Staff Writer

■(GIT) House Members today heard debate regarding HB2323, authored by Rep. Dale Smith, D-St. Louis, which creates the School District Budget Act. The intense debate, however, was not regarding the content of the bill, but rather an amendment proposed by Rep. Dan Webb, R-

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