

## **Carlin, Hawk worried about session**

Staff reports

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Local lawmakers expressed continued uncertainty this morning over the outcome of the special session on school finance.

The area's two House Democrats, Reps. Sydney Carlin and Tom Hawk, both predicted that even if a \$139 million bill passes the House today, a poison pill" provision would render it meaningless. The provision required passage of a constitutional amendment defining the Legislature's power to appropriate money for schools in order for the spending bill's provisions to become operative.

All indications I have are that the constitutional amendment is so hastily put together that it won't get the two-thirds vote to pass, which will kill the school finance bill," said Hawk.

Added Carlin, Our (Democratic) caucus is still solid. I don't think we're gonna do that (support any amendment provision)."

Then, Hawk and Carlin said, the most likely scenario was for reconsideration, either this afternoon or tonight, of a \$159.9 million bill that has already been defeated. Carlin predicted the bill would be modified downward, maybe to \$143 million (required by the Court) or close to it," with passage uncertain.

Hawk said either the \$159 million bill would be passed, or we'll do nothing." Neither would rule out working past the midnight deadline, however. Sen. Roger Reitz agreed with that as well. I think people want to leave with something," he said. It may not be enough. But the consensus of the Senate will be to try to get away with something."

Neither Hawk nor Carlin saw Democrats supporting a constitutional amendment, as would be required by the bill under consideration. I'm not willing to trash the constitution and invalidate districts like Manhattan's right of redress just because some lawmakers don't think the court made the right opinion," said Hawk.

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