

recognize that I think this Legislature has acknowledged that responsibility, acknowledged that debt, tried to pay that debt. And our problem has been, in large part, due to the courts that have overturned our decisions. That may happen again. We may go through, and I would hope that we can pass this legislation, have it go to court and it may be overturned. We don't know at this point what our chances are, it's a glimmer of hope, it's the only glimmer of hope that we have, and we may lose. We may find that in fact the door is shut, locked and bolted. But at least, but at least that will be an issue that I don't think can come back. I know Senator Chambers asked, I don't know of any other possibility out there. It's...something might come up that we don't know of now, just as this concept that we didn't know about a couple of years ago, but I don't see it right now, I don't see it. And by answering the question of this possibility not being upheld by the court, it will be...it will be at least answered, that question will be answered. And I don't think you'll see other legislation. I don't anticipate any further legislation under...under...under that guise or anything else I know of, at this time. Now, what if the court says yes? What if that glimmer of hope actually does end up with a positive response by the court? Well, then obviously the issue comes back to the Legislature, and we know that we have an opportunity to deal with the issue. And hopefully we can go forward and, in fact, provide for an installment payment of this, and again put the issue behind us. What I'm saying is either way the court goes, we get the issue resolved. The court says no, as far as I can see that ends the effort, unless something else comes up that I'm not aware of and I don't know of anything. The court says yes, we know that we can do something, then we work through it and find a way to, over a period of time, pay off the debt. So at least finally the issue...we know where we stand, we know what we can do, and this bill is the only chance we have to answer that question. I'd ask for your support for the bill. Again, the bill is brought to you on behalf of the Claims Board. The Claims Board did take action. The Governor had it introduced. We are introducing on behalf of the Governor. It's all of our best effort to try and resolve this dispute, this longstanding, ten year sore that's been allowed to...to continue to be a problem to our state, let's put some salve and a bandage on it. Let's allow us to finally do something to heal the wound and move forward finally, on a very, very contentious, difficult issue.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Vrtiska.