

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
Transcriber's Office

March 14, 2000 LB 1399

Revenue Committee solution could be a special tax. Three, the Education Committee has discussed a constitutional amendment to allow the disbursement of capital gains in the School Lands Funds for teacher salaries. If the constitutional amendment is introduced next year, it delays the solution for a number of years, brings us to another why? Why is this a problem for the Legislature? LB 1114 and LB 299 limited some districts' abilities to be competitive. Surrounding states have stepped up to the plate, recognizing that a problem is too large for local districts to fund on their own. Iowa set a minimum salary, Oklahoma is giving teachers across-the-board raises of \$3,000. Brings us to another "W", what? With all of the above considerations in mind, the Education Committee believes LB 1399 is what we can do this session. It disappoints teachers who wanted a solution in 2000. The amendment will address some issues and we can state here on the floor today that we are committed to finding the overall solution to the problem of low teacher pay. But we cannot address all of the "W's" today, so I don't believe we can justify backing up the commitment with dollars yet, not until we have a comprehensive plan that answers the questions I have raised, and that plan needs to be presented to the taxpayers for their input. The task force created in LB 1399 has its work cut out for it. By October 1st it must write model legislation, and that legislation will be presented at town hall-type meetings in each of the three congressional districts. There are new ideas that the task force is directed to consider--performance pay as opposed to the existing salary schedules also, an 11-month contract. These are two factors taxpayers have stated they want as part...discussed as part of the solution. And my message to NSEA, as we've discussed all of this, was simply, if we always do what we've always did, we'll always get what we've always got and that will be low salaries. And so I think it's time to consider the issues that I have raised to you. I believe that the to do or not to do would have been the easier part of the question. The "W's" that I've raised, I believe, make it impossible to solve that this short session, and that will be up to the task force. And although I would have liked to have been part of the final solution, it will be up to those of you who return next year to enact the recommendations from the task force. With that, I give the...my remaining opening to Senator Suttle.