

whether you want me to proceed or do you want to make some comments?

SENATOR WESELY: I would like to make some comments, if that is all right. Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, I realize that Senator Newell has been talking to you individually about this matter and I know that it has a certain appeal because as we saw when we debated the higher education bill there is a feeling, a very strong feeling in this Legislature about some of the actions the Board of Regents has taken over the past year. I agree with you and I have those same feelings, those very strong feelings that they have stepped out of line. They have gone beyond the bounds which are reasonable and prudent and I have a feeling that we need to take more than just some sort of token action as this amendment would be, to take more constructive action in terms of say Senator Lewis' and even Senator Newell's resolutions that look at the University, look toward reform, look toward ways to make them more accountable. That is the way we get at the problem that has been identified over the past year with the use of cash funds and with the commitments on the chiller, with some of the other problems that have come up. But what happens when you adopt an amendment such as this one in an attempt to slap the Board of Regents in the face to try to wake them up to the realities of the situation, that they cannot flaunt their power and ignore the Legislature, what you do, instead of getting to the Board of Regents, the person you hurt is going to be the faculty members of the University of Nebraska or the people you are going to really hurt are the students at the University of Nebraska because they are going to be the people that are going to pay the price that is going to result from the adoption of this amendment, if you approve it. This cut is going to result, I believe, directly in faculty salary cuts or at least not an increase nearly as much as they deserve. As I said before, even with this money in the bill, they cannot anticipate more than a 5.5% faculty salary increase for next year. State employees will be getting a 7% salary increase. You take this out, you take this money out and my prediction is you are not going to see a 5% even increase in faculty salaries. Maybe they will find another way. Maybe they will increase their student fees which are already the highest in the Big Eight. Maybe they will find a way to come up with the money. I don't know if that is going to be possible or not. But the end result is going to be the people you are going to hurt with this amendment isn't the Board of Regents, it is the faculty and the students at the University of Nebraska and that is really a tragedy I think. I urge you