

SENATOR REUTZEL: Mr. President, members of the body, I rise in support of Senator Warner's motion. I guess the situation might be different if the shoe were on the other foot. We hear a lot of people saying the private industry doesn't get this kind of a raise but private industry is not lagging behind state government salaries, and Senator Stoney is just talking about the insurance industry. I don't know, I can't say what Mutual is doing, Senator. But state government is lagging behind private industry, so what does that mean? In terms of double digit inflation which has been going on now for several years, state employees have been falling behind as everyone has, but state employees more so than private industry. Then that creates a problem because for years we have had a high turnover rate in several areas of state government and maybe Senator Fowler or one of the others could touch on this turnover rate and it is very high in many departments. It is alarmingly high and all that says is the state government, tax dollars are supporting a training program for private industry. We bring people in who are young and aggressive and want to become involved in government. We train them in specific skills. They develop their skills. We train them to the point that they are very proficient, and once they develop those skills, then they look around and say, hey, wait a minute. I could be doing the same job in private industry and I could be getting ten and fifteen and twenty or twenty-five percent more than what I am making here and so that is what happens. They'd be foolish not to unless they are very, very dedicated to state government but that doesn't put food on the table and pay the mortgage and so we train people. We spend a lot of tax dollars training them. They become proficient. They become useful and then they leave and so we start all over one more time. I would rather have an adequately paid state employee who is satisfied and doing, therefore, an adequate job, a very competent job and being very useful as opposed to two or three underpaid state employees who are disgruntled, who are not doing their job, whose productivity is less than what we would want in the private sector and certainly less than what we want in state government, then have them move on and we just start all over again. In the long run, we are going to be saving money, I believe, if we can bring some of these salaries a little bit closer to what they would be in private industry and I would hope that the body would very seriously consider what Senator Warner has said and vote for the Warner proposal.

SPEAKER MARVEL PRESIDING

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Sieck.