

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I want to echo what Senator DeCamp has said. I think the most cruel hoax you can perpetrate upon any group of people, particularly the public employees, and in this instance police and firemen, is to assure them that they have something which they do not have and the chickens will come home to roost and there won't be any roost there. It will be like New York City all over again. So I agree with what Senator Fowler has said that Lincoln is in the best condition perhaps of any of those communities and hopefully those benefits will not increase the deficit funding but I would hope that we do not allow the session to go by without taking another good look at what we have both in our metropolitan class city and some of those first class cities because I know that those funds are way underfinanced and simply we do not have the money in those funds to take care of the benefits which we have provided. And so while I can support the bill in this instance, I think that we had better take a look because irresponsibility is going to come home and it will be our fault and no one else's. So between the time that the bill comes up again on Select File, I would like to visit with anyone who is interested to see if something can be done to correct those inequities that exist in other cities.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Wesely, do you wish to close?

SENATOR WESELY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, I would like to express my appreciation to Senator Schmit and Senator DeCamp for bringing out again a very serious problem that we have perhaps in some of our smaller towns and perhaps even in our largest town in the state concerning funding of pensions. But again I would emphasize that this bill deals only with Lincoln, that I did check very carefully with the question of are they funding their present liabilities and will they fund this new additional liability, and I found them to indeed have a good standing with their pension, a willingness to support this increased benefits adequately so that the pension is adequately funded and, quite frankly, that was my main concern with the whole situation and that is why we sat down with the police and firefighters and sat down with the city and said, "Now this is what they are looking at. What can you afford?", and worked out this compromise so that the city actually will be able to fully fund what is necessary and the benefits that are equitable in support of the firefighters and police are provided for and I think that you can see that we were able to work out, I think, a very agreeable solution to the problem. The broader questions that Senator Schmit