

employment before retirement age. Currently, the first class cities and police get a financial windfall, if you will, the interest off the police employees' contribution, for example, if someone for whatever reasons terminates employees, and for that reason we think that it is unfair. There are no other retirement systems in the state that allow this. Now this bill has some fiscal impact on some first class cities. Some first class cities have their pension plans in a sound enough financial situation that they can absorb this with no problem. Some communities have not been contributing to their retirement plan and they will have to develop extra revenue to fund this. Now I have offered to the League of Municipalities to offer a one year exemption from the spending lid so that these communities could catch up or start catching up with their retirement contributions. I have not....I guess I have offered that indirectly through the police lobbyists and I have not heard back on that amendment. So I guess at this point I can't say whether we will offer that amendment or not. Now this is a very limited change as far as the first class police and fire. And, again, all it is is to try now for some equity so that an employee can get the interest on the money that they are required to contribute to the retirement system, or if they work for a city more than ten years, they have an option of taking a retirement benefit. Now Senator Nichol of Scottsbluff had a more far-reaching bill that was introduced to change in many ways the first class police system, and after visiting with Senator Nichol and the various other people, the committee decided not to advance that bill because it was too far-reaching a change and then we recognized the fiscal situation of the cities. So we opted instead for Senator Rumery's bill. Senator Rumery's bill originally came in just for first class firefighters. The committee amendment adds first class police so that we have both systems to achieve uniformity. Inadvertently, in the language the committee drafted we put a lower retirement age for the police than currently exists. So my amendment to the committee amendment changes back that retirement age of police from 55 to what the current law provides. So I would recommend adopting that just for technical uniformity. Then the committee amendment is designed to provide the same benefit to the first class police that Senator Rumery proposed for first class fire, and in that way with the committee amendment we can talk about both systems and whether this benefit or right should be provided to the employees. So I would recommend no matter how you feel on the bill to get it into a shape that is technically correct and provide for equity between the police and fire, that you adopt both the amendment to the committee amendment, then adopt the committee