

PRESIDENT: Senator Wesely, you have 3 1/2 minutes.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you. Mr. President and members, I sponsored the last rewrite of the teacher tenure law back in 1982 and can tell you that that is a very difficult and complex issue, and I also want you to know that back at that time, there was a long series of negotiations that resulted in the current statute that we now have in place, and it used to be two-year probationary period and it went to three years, and it took a great deal of negotiation with the school boards and the teachers to reach the compromise that we have. There was some give and take on both sides and we did pass that bill, and now seven years later we are here discussing going on the floor of the Legislature from three to five years. I just think it is inappropriate, having gone through the experience in the last time we rewrote this. It needs more attention than this body can give it on the floor of this Legislature and it is completely inappropriate to bring up at this time without a hearing, without separate consideration. It is a difficult, complex important issue that can't be dealt with in this fashion, and so I would reject any effort to bring the amendment to the floor of the body.

PRESIDENT: Senator Nelson, did you wish to speak on suspension of the rules? Followed by Senator Lynch.

SENATOR NELSON: I don't believe I will follow through with voting for the suspension of the rules, but I guess I just as well take this opportunity, along with some of the others. I very much disagree with Senator Withem that because my dog ran across your lawn, and so on, that teachers are dismissed for that purpose. I believe that we have close to 20,000 teachers and I think 71, 69, 80 were dismissed, or a very, very, very low percentage. This is the thing that is brought to me more and more of any other question. If a teacher is good and a teacher has no problems, that is the ones that we want to teach our kids. That is the quality teachers that we want. They should have no problem. In fact, they should support this because that is one of the reasons that the public are objecting to increased teachers' salaries and increased costs for education. You are covering up for the nonprofessional teacher, the teacher that is not willing to put in the extra hours, that may or may not be needed during the nine months, and many of those things, the classroom teacher, and the reason that the...and then we come back to say the administration, that is their problem. I would