

think that is a bad precedent because it is going to eat us alive here in the future as we continue to increase teachers' salaries. And we will be the ones setting it, we will be the drivers from now on. Local school boards, they will set their salaries, what they can afford with the property taxes. From this point on, if you pass this bill, it will be the State Legislature that becomes the school board when it comes to negotiating teachers' salaries, because we will be, you know, whatever the school board does, we will do over and above that. I prefer to leave my trust in the local school board, give them some finances to increase teachers' salaries, but not making it mandated, not making it a separate thing. You know, we have argued and bickered about the funding level of LB 89, we have argued and bickered about the undue stress NSEA has put on all of us, whichever it is, on believing their cause. We have never argued about, on this floor, at least, what exactly LB 89 does, and it deviates totally from the norm of the way this state operates local school districts. I would offer you this amendment. You simply, in essence, what you are really going to do, you can still pass LB 89, and we can all go home and beat our chest and say, we believe in teacher salaries, we believe in education, but we believe a local school board is the best place to make a decision on that salary. And let's just say, for instance, you have a school that has 20 students, I mean 20 teachers in a school board...on a school. Let's say that there has been a great deal...let's say Senator Baack's choice bill passes, and let's say that for whatever reason that student is going to transfer because of a gifted program in another district. That school board sits there and will say, well, if we don't hire a gifted teacher, we are going to lose a student or two or three, and it is in our best interest to hire a gifted teacher. Well, with LB 89, you pass that, the school board has no money to do anything. I mean, you have taken the flexibility away. If you adopt this amendment, you are pumping money into a school board for teachers and it is distributed on a teacher basis, and, theoretically, the money from 89 goes to teachers, but it is not separate over and above that. It gives the school board flexibility and so, instead, if they want to bump teachers' salaries up by \$500 for each teacher, they say, in the best interest of the student and our school district, it'd be wiser to hire a gifted teacher. Now I don't think the school boards in the state are against teachers. Now just the other day when Mr. Kriha of the NSEA says, school boards want to give teachers a salary increase, they have to have the funds to do it. Well, let's give them the funds to do it, but not with the