

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Moore, please, followed by Senator Abboud.

SENATOR MOORE: Senator Morrissey just gave us a good reason to vote for this amendment. I agree with you, Senator Morrissey. The argument does need to focus on teacher salaries and we do need to increase teachers' salaries and you and I will disagree with those folks saying, those cotton-pickin' teachers are paid too much already. I disagree with those people that say that teachers are the ones that drive the new cars in town, have the new houses. You and I are both enlightened enough to know that, with a four-year degree, the teaching profession is not going to make you a lot of money and you may be wise to stay out of it. You and I agree that we need to raise teachers' salaries, so you and I agree on that. We are going to disagree on the method to attack that problem, that's what we disagree on. Now I am saying that this state has always prided itself, sometimes rightly, sometimes wrongly, in a very high degree of local control. And LB 89 strikes at the heart of how we educate our children in this state because the state is, in my opinion and only my opinion, is going to begin to really negotiate the teachers' salaries in the State of Nebraska. And I am going to be passing out something here that those school boards that Senator Withem says we need to dismantle, in 1986 and '87 those school boards gave the second highest increase in teachers' salaries in the nation, the second highest increase, a 10 percent increase. In '86-87 when the norm was 5 percent, Nebraska school boards raised their teachers' salaries by 10 percent. That mechanism will work if given more money. And by making this amendment, we don't have to go to the old state aid formula, we can develop a new one that gives funding for teachers. This money, you have foundation and equalization and it is very flexible, so it's still theoretically flexible, but this is money that the state is going to give you to pay teachers with as you so choose. LB 89, in its original form, does not do that because it takes the school board totally out of the picture. LB 89 in its original...as it stands right now, just bypasses the school board. I don't want to do that. I believe our mechanisms, I've stated, it's proven that it will work, given more money with this amendment we can accomplish that goal, with this amendment, we can start talking...philosophically you will have really addressed my concerns and with some other provisions I may even vote for the bill because I agree with Senator Morrissey and Senator Withem, teachers' salaries need to be raised in this state, but I do not