

Please.

SENATOR HEFNER: Senator Lynch, would you go over that first \$40 million in the first phase, the first year? Where does that money go to? Does all of that money go to teachers that are below the \$18,000 per year level?

SENATOR LYNCH: Oh, yes, thank you, Senator Hefner. The way the amendment is written, in the first year if \$40 million were available to be distributed to school districts to spend as they see fit, all of it would be spent in that way with the exception of about \$6 million in that first year and first \$40 million. That \$6 million is about what we estimate would be needed to help supplement those schools who have teachers making less than \$18,000. All of the rest, the 34 million, would be used for distribution as described in Phase II.

SENATOR HEFNER: Okay, thank you. I agree that our teachers need more money, but I don't know if this is the right way to do it. I think a better way would be to increase state aid to schools. And remember, I think it was...

PRESIDENT: (Gavel.) Would you please hold down the conversation. You're distracting Senator Hefner and making it difficult for us...(gavel).

SENATOR HEFNER: Thank you, Mr. President, I just lost my train of thought but remember seven or eight years ago when we increased state aid \$40 million in one year? I proposed after that to increase state aid to schools by the same percentage that we increased the state budget because I felt that way that state aid would increase, but I wasn't able to get too far on that. But I feel if we go this route, that it would be the first step for the state to take over our primary educational system, the first...the K-12 system, and I still like the local school board system and I think we need to do all we can to protect the system. Okay, as I understand the bill, it will cost the state \$40 million the first year and an additional 35 million the second year, but we'll still have to appropriate 40 million the second year too, so that will be a total of 75 million. Do you folks realize that that's nearly or about, approximately, 7 percent of our General Fund budget? So I think we need to realize that. Okay, another question I have and maybe Senator Lynch can answer this in...when he speaks, but what happens if the state does not fund this? Or say that we