

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Yes...Mr. Chairman, I think anything that pertains to a bill is germane and my...

PRESIDENT: Okay, thank you. Do you have anything else on the bill, Mr. Clerk?

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Moore would move to amend the bill. (The Moore amendment appears on page 1295 of the Legislative Journal.)

PRESIDENT: Senator Moore, please.

SENATOR MOORE: Mr. President and members, this amendment, quite simply, deals with Section 5 of the bill in Phase I. What it would do is simply remove the language...as the language is now read, in the statute the minimum salary in the State of Nebraska will be \$18,000. What this amendment quite simply does is it strips out that mandatory minimum language in there but still allows the funding mechanism to stay intact. And the rationale behind this is that if we, as a state, if we're going to set a minimum salary, we're really setting a base salary. We're setting a base salary that, as in most school districts across the state, that base salary really is the engine that drives the whole salary schedule. I don't think we want to be setting the base salary like that. I think as the bill was written actually does, even though it really doesn't, it really does, by all practical terms, set a base salary that's going to drag that engine along that drives the whole salary schedule. And I guess I don't think that we want to...we, you know, we said before we desire to maintain some degree of local control and I think it's...this amendment, quite simply, would pull out all language in Section 5, subsection (1), and throughout there that talks about a minimum salary. And so, in essence, what it would now do is that for four years the state would fund the difference, would supplant money up to \$18,000 but it would not say in statute that a school district has to pay every teacher \$18,000 and then when the funding goes away that language would not remain in statute that mandates that every school teacher in the state has to earn \$18,000. And I guess I want to make myself clear that I, as a matter of fact, will probably agree with Senator Lynch and the supporters of the bill that I think it's a laudable goal to get all teachers in the state up to \$18,000. I think that's something we need to work towards. By adopting this amendment, you would give some funding for school districts that are below \$18,000 but without this amendment you