

the reason I like that better than actually my amendment that I'm actually talking about right now, is that in my original amendment, basically what you would have done is you would have given any school district, even though they have, as Senator Ashford would say, they've abrogated their responsibility and haven't paid a teacher enough. Under my amendment you would reward them for that type of behavior which really probably isn't the most wise thing to do. However, Senator Conway's amendment that will be soon be coming, you will give them a carrot, an incentive to get to a salary level. And I think that is much better than...so if a school district really wants to ignore it, doesn't want any of this money for that teacher, then they won't raise their salaries any, but that is a decision that local board can make. But if that local school board wants to tap into this new state aid formula and have that particular teacher count towards the total state aid pool they would draw from, from this fund, they would have to maintain that sort of minimum salary for that teacher and so I think it's a much better approach than the original LB 89 where you were saying you're going to have a minimum salary in statute. I think it's actually better than my amendment because you're not rewarding the school district to just simply ignore the problem with teachers' salaries. I think this amendment will actually be better than state aid on the foundation-equalization state aid, and the reason I think it's better than that because if we, as a Legislature, simply put money into foundation-equalization, it would probably be lost in the shuffle. Unfortunately, that sort of state aid always has connotations of property tax relief. That's not necessarily bad, but I think it's important that this Legislature in this year, as we're doing a variety of things, you know, really make a commitment towards increasing the overall spending in elementary and secondary education as we're probably going to do in higher education. And as I am still looking at Senator Conway...well, I'm still looking at Senator Conway, I guess I don't have much more to say at this point in time. Would welcome some input and I know we're kind of springing this on the body this morning, but I firmly believe that, you know, this amendment satisfies the problems I've had with LB 89. One thing I keep thinking it's important to remember that those of us that now would support the bill even though we fought it tooth and nail, is that we were...I've...you know, I'm speaking for myself now, I've been consistent from the beginning, saying that about a 15, \$20 million figure, I believe, is sustainable, and I said that back in January and February when certain groups were trying to make people believe