

amount which wasn't on yesterday's amendment and we've added this morning. Well, by bringing that in at the \$16,000 level, what we're going to be able to do is you're going to have a .6 factor towards the pool for anyone you have over 16,000. Next year we'll move that to 17 and then if this program is around any longer than that, we'll probably move that threshold even up a little bit higher to try to coax people along into the salary increases. But then the final aspect of the amendment is that it brings it in at a \$20 million contribution for the next two years, 20 million this year and 20 next year which is another amendment from...change from Senator Lynch's proposal yesterday of 25 million per year. It's...people that we talked to in terms of agreement this morning that were interested in the bill concurred with the \$20 million level. So, basically, what we're talking about is it eliminates Phase I which should take care of the local control question. It brings the threshold down to \$16,000 which then gives you an enticing, a bit of an enticer to participate in the pool once you're paying at the \$16,000 level and it funds it at a \$20 million level. So those are really the three most salient aspects of this particular amendment.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you, sir. Before proceeding to discussion on the Conway amendment, the Chair is pleased to advise that Senator Beck has some guests in our north balcony. We have 75 seventh and eighth graders from St. Bernard's School in Omaha with their instructor. Would you people please stand and be recognized. Thank you. We're pleased to have you with us. Also entering our south balconies, guests of Senator Richard Peterson, from Christ Lutheran School in Norfolk, we have 50 fourth graders. Would you folks please wave and be recognized by your Legislature. Thank you. We're glad to have you as well. Discussion on the Conway amendment (gavel) starting with Senator Withem, followed by Senator Dierks and Haberman. Senator Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I rise with not a tremendous amount of enthusiasm, I will admit, but sense of reality that I'm probably going to vote for the Conway amendment. My preference would have been not to have supported the Lynch amendment yesterday, to have left the bill in pretty much the same funding level since...that it was when it came out of the committee. I think that was a sustainable level. I think that was a level that we could actually...may see some changes take place in our education system as a result