

lower salaries? You don't. School boards will clearly understand that whatever they negotiate salaries that is the typical negotiation that would go along in any year. And they will also understand that they may be able to negotiate higher to get more funds from LB 89, but they also will understand that those funds, like federal funds, can dry up and they will make those decisions based upon what can they afford to do if things dry up, and I suspect very clearly and very convincingly to myself that boards will make that decision on that basis, just as they make decisions on federal funds that supposedly will be there, but what happens to them when those federal funds under Gramm-Rudman or anything else are gone? They have to face the realities on that and they would make the realities...meet the realities. So it would not affect it at that point. I think the body would be...has found a focus point for the Conway amendment. The meeting this morning was very good. There was strong give and take. There were strong comments that were made and there was a consensus that was agreed upon on a broad spectrum of areas and the Conway amendment, I think, is a good step forward on that and something the body can live with itself as LB 89 continues on to passage. And, with that, I'd give any remaining time to Senator Withem if he so desires.

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute, Senator Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yeah, just very briefly, Senator Hefner, I have an answer to your question now. The probationary period is the same across the state. It is three years across the state. There is no distinction. I was told that by the former Chair of the Education Committee, Senator Vickers, who I guess passed legislation making them consistent. The only other thing I guess I would like to comment on is this question that kind of keeps cropping up but I don't know if it has ever been addressed directly is, why are we only doing this for two years, like this is something unique and strange, we're only doing a two-year program here. You only appropriate money for two years. I mean, that's all that there is. Now, in effect, we will pass this bill and this becomes a permanent program in state statute until such time as it is repealed. The Appropriations Committee will make a recommendation two years down the road at what level it should be funded. It can be higher, it can be the same, it can be less. The body then will vote on that and we will then fund the program at whatever level we may wish to.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Time.