

know, and stand on the floor and express his will as an individual senator, as is anybody who was at the table this morning free to change their mind and come forward and offer amendments in good faith to deal with portions of the bill that they still have troubles with. But let me comment on what it was we attempted to do, why we got together, what we tried to agree to, and, in effect, what the Conway amendment did. I would like to lay out what the teachers had to give up already as a result of the Conway amendment, and what we are doing if we go this one step further with the Smith amendment. We had a series of amendments that were filed on the bill yesterday. We attempted to get those people that had amendments filed together to talk about, is there some way that we can consolidate the various concerns we have into one particular amendment, and get an up or down vote on that particular approach? We chose the Conway amendment. We adopted that unanimously and I think it puts the bill probably in the type of shape that it should be to go over to the Governor's desk for her consideration and, hopefully, her approval to become part of the statute. There are about four issues we dealt with in the Conway amendment. All four of those up to this point have been very strong, dig your heels in approaches from NSEA. NSEA told us, very privately, \$25 million is as low as they wanted to go. What did we do? We took another \$5 million out of their hide this morning, out of a bill that is very important to them to the point where it is probably going to be difficult, frankly, for them to go back to their membership and say they did a good job getting a bill passed, even if it passes. They told us that Phase I was key to them, that these poor teachers out in the districts that are not getting paid the dollars that they need to get paid need to be in the bill. We took that out. We agreed to take that out. They wanted a minimum salary level stated in the bill that the state is mandating that. We took that out. We agreed that we won't do that and we will take that out of the bill. And they liked the formula, it was their formula. They created it. We made an adjustment in the formula, not a very great one, maybe, but we did make an adjustment in the formula. Ironically, I guess, one of the reasons why, you know, Phase I was opposed by some members of the body was that it tends to give too much money to those districts that haven't been making an attempt on their own. We were told about a district in Adams County that has the resources to pay its teachers but has not done so, and that we ought not be sending money out to those districts. So we agreed to that amendment and I think the teachers who are supporting