

have several school districts, most of my school districts right now will qualify some of their people. Some of them may qualify all of their people. Some of my rural districts are going to qualify for some of the people that are already on board. They have got other people that, hopefully, will see this incentive as an opportunity to try to draw them up to that level. So it is not simply a redistribution. We do redistribution under state aid and I think that is another issue and I support increases in state aid, but this is a different technique. This is an incentive to try to draw those values up, and so I will not accept the fact that this is an urban bill in opposition to a rural aspect.

PRESIDENT: Just a minute. Senator Abboud, please, followed by Senator Withem.

SENATOR ABOUD: Mr. President, colleagues, I have enjoyed the debate today on whether teachers' salaries should be raised. It is always interesting to hear the different arguments on this issue because it is such an important part of our state process. We spend so much money on education, that is essentially what state government does provide is education at the university level, education through state aid to our local schools. We provide the education for the youth of Nebraska. One particular point, though, that I think should be addressed, at least for my particular districts. I believe that teachers' salaries should be increased and I do believe that, at least in my district in metropolitan and suburban Omaha, they have been increased and maybe that is part of the problem. I think Senator Lamb's characterization of this as helping urban areas, rural areas may be accurate, and for that reason, I have a real difficult situation trying to decide on how to best handle it. I do realize that this will be helping the urban areas of the state and I want to do my part in helping my teachers in my district. It is difficult, though, when we talk about \$20 million to examine this \$20 million in light of the overall budget, and it is hard to analyze the budget when we have this bill on Select File. It is much easier to look at this bill and the \$20 million in light of the overall budget when we get the bill over to Final Reading, if it does make it over there, because the \$20 million that we are talking about at this particular time could be used possibly for another purpose, being a homestead exemption, maybe additional state aid, whatever that might be. I would say, though, that the district that I represent, the districts, two school districts, we have had