

and giving it to those other teachers that weren't included. And the argument on the other side is that they could be paid more because of valuations of some of those districts could, in fact, pay them higher salaries. But my argument still remains those teachers aren't getting the salary. They are the lowest paid categories of all teachers, and that is what my idea for this whole thing is, to enhance their salaries also so that all teachers can share. This amendment maintains the philosophy to provide incentives for increasing education for the teachers themselves, and at the same time to the school districts to bring the salaries up, while at the same time it helps those teachers who need it the most in those 525 positions that we have across the state, and, particularly, I suppose more in rural Nebraska, regardless of what their school districts will decide to pay them, they are going to get a little bit of the piece of the pie, I guess I'd call it. I ask for your support. I would try to answer any questions that you might happen to have. I hope that the handout is self-explanatory. If it isn't, I'll try to respond to questions. I would ask your support for the amendment and let's go from there. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Discussion on the Smith amendment. Senator Nelson, followed by Senators Lynch, Lamb, Conway, Withem, Schellpeper, Rod Johnson, Langford, Smith. Senator Nelson.

SENATOR NELSON: Mr. Speaker, do we bring our breakfast up to the floor then, down through the list? I very much support Senator Smith's amendment. The whole basis of increasing the teachers pay, the case was made on the very low paid teachers, the Class I districts, the Class II districts, the same old thing that happens to us down here, I don't care if it's funding a water project or whether it's homestead exemption or whatever it is, we make an example of the lowest paid, the most needy, and too often, time we get through, we've forgotten them altogether. The case on the teachers was brought to us, the fact that we must compensate the low paid. It was put out that I think most people in the state actually feel that most of the teachers are not making over 18,000 a year, absolutely untrue. So I know that some will say, and I have a point. Originally the bill said that, well, we, as state taxpayers, we'll pick up everybody's salary that is not paying 18,000 a year. So what incentive was there ever for that district to pay more than 13 or 14,000? You and I both know there is absolutely no lack of teachers. There is probably 50 teachers applying for every job