

benefit plan is once you provide a benefit for one group, others want the same benefit. So, if you give the patrol 25 and out, you know the teachers are coming in with 35 and out, and that's a pressure that's always there. Others will come in, judges and other employee groups will, one after another, come in and point to the patrol and say, if they can be out at 25, we can be out at 35, or we can be out at 30, or we can be out at whatever they want to propose. So, in terms of precedent, you make a serious mistake by going forward with this legislation. I have a great respect for the State Patrol. They're wonderful people, I've helped them on a number of bills and feel very good about their abilities and the service they provide to the state. But you've got to think in terms of a perspective for the taxpayer, for the overall system that we have in place. And to make this change, I think, is another mistake that leads to other mistakes further eroding the reasonable retirement plans that we now have in place. So I, for one, will ask your opposition to this bill, vote against this legislation and let us not change the situation here and then lead to changes elsewhere that I think we'll regret in the future.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. The Chair recognizes Senator Schellpeper.

SENATOR SCHELLPEPER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and members. I guess this is a bill that you have to look at and think what it does for the people that are actually in the State Patrol, because they are a different class of people than what we most generally deal with. These are people that have to be out on the road for 25 years or longer before they can retire. And I think that this is a bill that compensates them in some way for what they do for us. It's a different profession than what most of us are used to. It's a very young man's profession, I would guess, because when you're out there, and the hours that they have to keep and some of the things they have to do, it's a very tiring and also very high pressure position. So I think we need to take that into consideration when you're dealing with this. I think this is a bill that is a very fair bill. I think Senator Wesely and Senator Nelson are not looking at really what it does for these individuals. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Before recognizing Senator Bernard-Stevens, the Chair is pleased to note that we have some special guests under the north balcony. The LB 247 higher education consultants are with us this morning, Pat Whitmeyer,