

state support for education for the purposes of offsetting those dollars that otherwise have to be raised through local property taxes. So we did not feel that that was an appropriate solution. So this portion of the committee amendment indicates that those funds could not be used for funding this bill. That amendment may seem less critical at this moment because of the fine work being done by the Appropriations Committee in balancing our state budget, but at the time, it seemed important and I think probably is still a worthy amendment. The second part dealt with the dilemma we are in with the interrelationship between the budget limitation imposed in LB 1059 and the potential someday that this Legislature may decide that \$20 million was not enough for teacher salaries, that, really, that we may want to increase that. Again, the political realities of the situation are that we are not this year looking at increases. As a matter of fact, I've noticed Senator Lynch has filed an amendment to LB 91A, which actually decreases the appropriation from what was there before. The original bill excludes all teacher...all funds from this proposal from the local lid requirement. The committee felt that was going too far, although we understood the rationale. The rationale is that if you do not exclude some, at least the increased funds, from the budget limitation, that if we appropriate more money for teachers salaries and local school districts then have to pass that on to the teachers in teacher pay, they will have to cut other items from their local budget, and that if we are, in fact going to use this for enhancements, those dollars should not be under the lid, and that is the way the original bill was drafted, Section 3 of the original bill. What we are suggesting is because budgets have been based on, the base budget for lid purposes has been based on a budget that has teacher enhancement money in it, that the existing \$20 million ought to be under that limitation, but any increases are not to be counted as against local budget limitation because, again, those are dollars that would be provided for enhanced teacher pay. They should not be...and if the Legislature wants to do that with state funds, they ought to go for that purpose and not force local school boards in the untenable position of having to cut other salaries, other programs to make room for what the Legislature would mandate back on them. So that is the rationale for the committee amendments and I would urge your support.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Withem. While the Legislature is in session and capable of transacting business, I