

based on performance-based salaries which would have a direct correlation to a specific state agenda of improvement of quality of education. I regard the paying of teachers salaries as a pass through to the ultimate public policy of getting better education for kids. I don't do it because...because teachers are an end in themselves. They are, in my estimation, fine people and very caring and concerned human beings. I am darned grateful they are there. I know that they work under a great many difficulties, but I want us spending twenty millions of dollars a year for the purpose of paying teacher salary increases for kids, for better classrooms, for better education, and I am now interested in knowing how LB 91 will do the same thing, and why we are being called upon to do it. I will support the Withem amendment. In fact, if I had right now my predilection, I would use the Withem amendment for dollar one in LB 91, and that way I would have a clear public policy rationale for doing what 91 wants to do. I am a persuadable vote but I am an unpersuaded vote at this moment and I am listening to the debate to hear that rationale.

**SPEAKER BAACK:** Thank you, Senator Landis. The next speaker on the Withem amendment is Senator Bernard-Stevens.

**SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the body. This is one issue that I will speak a couple of times on, I am sure, before the time is over. I do want to comment briefly on the Withem amendment, as it is now, to make sure the body understands exactly what the Withem amendment does. In essence, the Withem amendment does not change anything at all in the \$15 million that will eventually become the A bill of LB 91. What it does say is that if the Legislature decides to do LB 91, without a sunset, and it does come back two years from now in the mainline, and we are going to decide how much money to put into it, that if the Legislature would put \$20 million into it, which would be an increase of five, that \$5 (sic) would go into performance-based. If the Legislature decided to put \$40 million in, then anything above 20 million, which would be in that first five that would have gone to performance-based, between 15 and 20, anything above 20 million would be a two-thirds, one-third. Two-thirds would go into salary enhancement and the other third would be going into performance-based. That, in essence, is the Withem amendment, so I wanted to make sure everyone understands that. And, technically, if you passed the Withem amendment, it has no bearing, whatsoever, in the differing distribution of funds