

profession, try to get advanced degrees, and if there is no stair-stepping in those awards, I don't think you are going to find any of those intentions, any of those motivations being adhered to. It's simply a pool of cash to be distributed amongst the teachers in whatever fashion they please. And so that is my amendment, and I hope the body reinstates that language. I think we fought for it and we had good reason before, and it continues to have that kind of support to the actual concepts that we said we were trying to achieve.

SENATOR WARNER PRESIDING

SENATOR WARNER: If I can interrupt a moment, Senator Wehrbein has eight members of the Bicentennial Extension Club in Syracuse, Nebraska. They are seated in the south balcony. If that group would please stand so that the Legislature can recognize you, the group from Syracuse. Thank you. There is a number of lights on. Senator Abboud, did you wish to speak? Senator Crosby, do you wish to speak? Senator Conway. Senator Nelson. Senator Landis. Senator Horgan. Senator Horgan.

SENATOR HORGAN: (Mike off) ...to oppose the Conway amendment. I agree with Senator Conway that, indeed, we should do something to encourage local school districts and local school boards to take responsibility and to raise teachers' salaries to a livable wage. But I am afraid that I have to oppose the amendment because what it does and what it's shown to do over the last two years is to punish those teachers who have the misfortune of being somewhat landlocked to their local school districts. Most of these teachers are in rural school districts. They are teaching in those districts because of family obligations to the community, and they don't have the opportunity to move to other school districts that pay more competitive wages. And if we enact the Conway amendment, what you will see continue to happen is what has happened the last two years. Those school districts that share the least, that reward their teachers the least, and who are not willing to recognize the value of educators in their community will continue to be as tightfisted as they have been in the past. And what you will see is those teachers, who can least afford not to share in this LB 91 money, will continue to not share, and they will suffer from that. And I believe it is particularly unfair to those teachers because they are the least likely to be able to move onto other districts, and the local school districts, regardless of their ability to pay, recognize that they have those teachers right where they want them, and