

as already has been stated. And I think we're going to be making a very serious mistake. I think that's something we would all like to have happen but why is it that we've been on this at least every year that I've been here, which this is my fifth year, it was here when I arrived. I'm beginning to think it will be here when I leave. It's going on and on and on and if there's possibility to settle by now and save all the hundreds of thousands of dollars that we've spent up until now, why haven't we done it? But it hasn't been done. And so if we are truly on the verge of making some solution amicably, politically, if you will, and there's some sense that we are, not only in here but from the Governor's office, fine, but let's don't take away that lever that we have now. And I think we ought to recognize how serious a step that this really is after we have spent a lot of time and effort so far. The other thing is, and I'm not a lawyer, but I think that what does happen here could have far-reaching implications down the road for generations and generations to come, whatever the settlement might be or what might be negotiated. Like I said, I'm not a lawyer, but I think to take away this money at this stage of the game is very serious a step. If they do not need the money, it won't be spent. I don't think anyone can...will accuse anyone of...the Governor's office or otherwise of spending this money if it's not necessary. So if, in fact, there is an amicable settlement, that money won't be spent and it will still be there in a year or two or whatever it is. So I strongly urge you not, at this point, to remove this money. Do not support the amendment of Senator Schmit's.

**SPEAKER BAACK:** Thank you, Senator Wehrbein. Senator Hartnett.

**SENATOR HARTNETT:** Members, Speaker, members of the body, Mr. Speaker and members of the body, I also I think, at first blush, I think when Senator Schmit brought this and I visited with him privately, it sounds the best way to go is to take the money out and we'll show that we want to, you know, negotiate with good harm without any money there, but I also agree with what Senator Moore does. Maybe we need to...maybe the Natural Resources Committee and Senator Schmit has a lot more experience, and so forth, maybe after the session is over meet with Wyoming and get something done through the Governors, so forth, but let's keep this money in here for now and, hopefully, we don't have to spend it. So I rise to oppose Senator Schmit's amendment.