

employees of the Legislature a little differently. The Legislature, I think, is clearly probably next to the court system, the smallest subdivision of government that we have in terms of the legislative, the executive and the court branch and I'm not so sure we're not the smallest when you look at the total overall number of employees that we have here. They clearly do not fall in the category of being protected in any way, shape or form. There are those of us, myself in particular, who may go off into some kind of a rage and fire staff without much of a good cause. They don't have the security that is clearly evident and available to state employees in comparable positions. Doesn't mean that those employees don't have those same types of supervisors who aren't always level headed but there is no point in time where the employees and the Legislature are not at-will employees and that means I can fire any day, any time, any hour for any reason that happens to suit my whim at the moment. That, I think, deserves additional compensation. Call it combat pay, if you will, ladies and gentlemen. The fact of the matter is dealing with us at various times can equate to combat and I know that my employees would testify to the same. The issue is not one so much of money. It does not boil down to a huge amount of money and the fact that the Executive Board is going to examine the overall pay plan, the overall pay and wage scale as it relates to the Legislature, this interim I think shows a good faith effort on our part to adopt this amendment that has been presented by the Executive Board for a one-year proposal. It's only out there for one year. It says we're going to examine it over the summer and take a look at the addition...or the continuation of the 5 percent merit after we have examined the overall wage scale for the '92-93 fiscal year. I would urge adoption of the amendment. I don't think it is excessive by any measure. I think at best it is nothing more than continuing the status quo. It gives us some time to examine our overall pay scale and it also puts the employees on notice that a year from now they may not be looking at the same 5 percent merit proposal that has been on the books in the past. I think we owe that to them to give them some time to examine what we are about and to see what their options are in terms of employment should they choose to look elsewhere. I think it's a fair proposal. I think it's prudent on the part of the Legislature to lay it out there for a year, examine the overall pay plan and then go from that point once we have the information in front of us. To cut it off cold at this point is not fair to the employees. I have no problem with treating them a little differently than any