

money was put in the budget to implement that policy decision the argument is some how going to be turned on its head to say that because the Executive Board made that decision, as it should, something is wrong with it. That doesn't make sense. That is not a logical argument. The Executive Board, by a formal vote, favored and approved what it is that I'm advocating here today. A majority of us on the floor voted to put the money into the budget to carry out the decision that the Executive Board had taken. The Governor chose to veto that money out. Senator Warner has told you that, if we do not override, there will be two effects from that failure to override, if I construe properly and correctly what he said. First of all, the money, obviously, will not be put back in. But even if somehow additional money was found, he's going to take this vote to mean that the Legislature is giving the message that there is to be no additional merit pay, even if the money were found. I want to ask Senator Warner a question, based on that, because I don't want to misrepresent him. Senator Warner, is what I said a reflection of what you meant? And, if it's not, would you correct it.

SENATOR WARNER: No, that is what I said, Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Okay.

SENATOR WARNER: I would take that to be that direction.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Thank you. So, members of the Legislature and Senator Moore, even if somehow money that has been reappropriated to the Legislature would provide an overage, in terms of how it is obligated, that overage would not be used to make the merit pay available that the Executive Board voted to make available. I hope enough of you will support this, because it's for one year, then we will undertake the study and do what is appropriate. And I'm not going to go into what I feel would be appropriate at this time. But I do see the Legislature as a unique branch of government. I see the relationship of employees to their employers as being unique in state government. This is probably the body most sensitive to anything that appears in the media. One person will frown in a senator's district, and that senator will say, my constituents collectively, including all 32,000 or however many there are, has a certain opinion.

SPEAKER BAACK: One minute.