

this direct stipend methodology. If you're referring specifically to sales tax monies on motor vehicles...

SENATOR COORDSEN: No, no, I am referring to the direct stipend, bonus program, whatever you call it.

SENATOR WITHEM: I...I could find out how many states do a direct stipend program. I know the State of Iowa does. I don't know of others that do. Many other states have other programs where state money flows through different formula and different approaches to directly supplement teacher salaries.

SENATOR COORDSEN: Okay, thank you, Senator Withem. All through this particular discussion over this morning and the other hours that it has been addressed, it comes to my mind that the citizens of the State of Nebraska, something short of 1,600,000 people, pay in all taxes, fees of government at all level something in the range of \$3 billion. Now we are...are attempting to find bonus program money, salary incentive package, whatever nomenclature you want to use, to fund an addendum to the locally determined teacher salaries. By and large, and certainly the Bernard-Stevens amendment falls back on property taxes in some way or the other, that's been discussed, I think, at some length by a number of other people on the floor of the Legislature. My question of someone is this, that if, in fact, the burden of the \$15 million, or whatever that figure might be in the future when it's fully implemented, is going to have to be paid by some mechanism or the other, by the citizens of Nebraska who are paying taxes, why in the world don't we keep it in the same ball park? The same people are going to pay it. Why don't we, if it's the intent of the Legislature to do this, fund it from the equalization portion of state aid to education? That will reflect back, of course, in an increase in local property taxes, but all of the other measures, in some way or the other, reflect increased taxes, increased fees, increased sales taxes to fund this. Why don't we simply be straight up, straightforward, fund it from the current mechanism that we use for state aid to education, do it in that method and simply forget all of the other things that we're trying to accomplish to do what I suppose is viewed as an end run around public awareness? The folks aren't...that are out there, are able to read the newspapers and they're able to calculate what happens and they're able to make the money, hopefully, to pay whatever taxes are due. And it does not make a great deal of difference, nor common sense, to approach this issue in the manner that