

I think without exception we granted all PSLs so they would not have to lay anyone off simply to pay those that are remaining.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Senator Wehrbein. The final area I have on this particular committee amendment on 3...whatever it is, I can't see it though, 89, I'm going to go to the University of Nebraska now, jump, shift to UNL, and I personally agree with what the committee did as far as fully funding the...I believe it would have been 4 percent of what...what actually just fully funding at the university level what the actual contract negotiated was for the state employees. If...but, however, apparently, in reading the newspapers and talking with other people within the administration of the Legislature, there was...there is still some controversy as to whether or not that should have been done, whether that was a...that money should be actually reduced down somewhat. Again, the rationale for putting...for fully funding it at the university, rather than doing what we did for DPI, Social Services, those that come off the top of my head, Department of Education where they needed to, we only funded portions of it, but they financed the rest through their own agencies.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Well, the committee was convinced that, in this case the University of Nebraska, that they...there were some vacancy savings that perhaps should not have been taken and...or...vacancy, I forget the vacant...and the salaries were...the money was needed for the salaries increase, that...that there was a need for the system to have adequate money to pay their...their salaries. Now there is obviously a difference of opinion among some quarters as to whether that needed to be. I guess you'll have to make your own decision of what to do with higher education in Nebraska. The committee strongly felt that an adequate investment in our higher education, both in state colleges and University of Nebraska, and so we are funded accordingly in this particular budget.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: No, and again I reiterate I support that which you did. I think it was good policy for higher education. One of the points I want to make is why you think the Appropriations Committee did...its decision was good in this case and I know there may be some amendments later dealing with...with not maybe this issue but other issues in regards to the University of Nebraska on the funding level, is that there is a very close relationship between state dollars of what the state support is and what our tuition rate is and whenever