

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Will, your light is next.

SENATOR WILL: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body, I rise in opposition to the Beutler amendment. I do agree with one thing that Senator Wesely said that simply to vote for the Beutler amendment would be entirely symbolic because when you're talking about dealing with an aging population, a population that lives longer, a population a higher percentage of which will be older people, early retirement is a blip on the screen. This simply is not the issue that you should hang your hat on if you're concerned about an aging population. There are much larger issues regarding health care primarily that simply dwarf this issue. I think what this aspect with the Rule of 85 would accomplish is a couple things. Number one, I passed something out that is an analysis of the effect of LB 505 on OPS and primarily due to the Rule of 85 and it shows an actual savings. We all talk about cutting government and it's great rhetoric and it rarely happens, but this would actually be real tangible savings to Omaha Public Schools. Eventually after the bill is enacted, after the year 2000, the annual savings would be in the area of \$200,000. In the realm of the OPS budget, no, that's not a giant savings, but it is a real tangible savings that will occur. It's part of why the school district supports this bill. And the other thing that the Rule of 85 will accomplish is it frees up jobs for individuals that are looking to work for the school district, not only teachers, but also employees at all levels, maintenance employees, the people that take care of the buildings, the grounds, the people that work in the cafeterias, things like that and the fact is now if you look at OPS and I know this from visiting with individuals, there is a backlog of people who are trying to get jobs at all levels. There are people who have been trying to get jobs teaching for OPS for years and haven't been able to get in because of a backlog. There are people who have been trying to get in with the maintenance and grounds department which I worked for at one time and I personally know how difficult it is to get in there. But the fact is, what this would do, this Rule of 85, that it would encourage a modest number of people to retire earlier than they would normally. It would allow those who found their jobs, particularly teaching jobs, highly stressful and are at the point where they probably aren't functioning at full capacity. They're not doing the children that attend OPS any favors. It's better all around, costwise, educationwise, to get an individual