

what...with which you amend this, are you, however, contemplating or considering that the private industry would necessarily have to match the benefits of the state?

SENATOR BEUTLER: Not necessarily, Senator. It may well be that in certain state agencies the salaries and compensation levels have...have not been adequately reviewed or are out of proportion. However, I think that comparability is a standard and, as I say, I don't know that you can be exact on this but I don't necessarily mean...I don't mean at all that it necessarily has to be the same as the public wage.

SENATOR MAURSTAD: Okay. And my concern is from this perspective in that the compensation packages for public employees might relate fairly closely to those of large...larger industry, but might be, I think...I think it would be proved that would be in excess in a number of cases the smaller businesses, the types of businesses that, in fact, might be contracting with the state to do smaller types of jobs, you know, the small three, four or five person shop that maybe doesn't have the retirement benefits, health benefits and some of those types of things without getting into the debate of whether they should or not but yet could contract with the state, be able to provide a good service to the state and, as a result, might be able to raise the level of their profits enough to be able to provide additional benefits to those employees and maybe...maybe grow. So my concern was for the smaller businesses that might do some contract type work with the state that would not match the state's benefits and so I would not want to have the intent that we would only be able to allow large corporations or large businesses to be able to take part in this process.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Well, certainly my intent would be to approach it with a measure of flexibility and allow...and to await the event with DAS to see how it is that they interpret this particular provision. But I understand what you're saying. At the same time, I would not want all those employees down at the Beatrice Center who are prime targets for privatization to lose their jobs simply because somebody made the decision they were being paid too much and had too many benefits.

SENATOR MAURSTAD: And, Mr. President, with that...with that further explanation, I also will support...support the amendment because I think...I think our thoughts are relatively similar