

Grafton Elementary School in Grafton, Nebraska, grades K through 6. They are...there are two teachers and their van driver and parents. They are all in the north balcony. Will you stand to and be recognized, please. Welcome to the Legislature. Senator Maurstad, your light is next.

SENATOR MAURSTAD: Thank you, Madam President. I also rise to oppose the amendment. I don't think that the senator that's brought it has made a good argument to this point as to why we should back up on the commitment that we made, and so that's one reason why I don't think we ought to adopt this amendment. Secondly, this is an issue about equity. Whether it's a few dollars or a few quarters or whatever, this is important to the individuals that are providing these services to the developmentally disabled. The developmentally disabled deserve to have people assisting them that are properly trained, that are...continue to be motivated in their work and continue to not go on the same path that we're on now where there is so much turnover in this particular area because of the discrepancy that is involved because of previous state policy. And, finally, I would just like to indicate that this is probably a pretty good example of why it took so many years for the blueprint to finally make its way into policy. This is, I believe, merely a roadblock to...for financial fiscal reasons only and does not have anything to do about policy. It does not have anything to do about whether this is the right time or not the right time except that this is a political year, that's the only effect that the timing has on this, and would ask the members to oppose the Avery amendment.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Maurstad. Senator Schimek.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Thank you, Madam President, members of the body. I wasn't...I didn't intend to get up on this issue, but I am rising in opposition to the amendment and I do believe that pay equity does mean retention of workers and I know that these people have not been paid adequately over the years. And I guess all I was going to do at this point was ask Senator Wehrbein how this would individually impact the workers and I guess I can't get a complete answer to that and I'm sort of remembering now, but it differs a little bit from region to region and type of worker to type of worker. But, Senator Wehrbein,...