

What we have done is we have implemented the CIR system whereby, after negotiations and certain steps are taken, a bargaining situation can go to the CIR, decisions can be made and ultimately we hope, and that the statutory structure is such, that we arrive at what is best for both the political subdivisions and the bargaining employees. But to do a statutory limit such as contemplated by this amendment I think would be extremely ill advised at this point. If this is a policy change that we want to make it is something that should be considered fully, as far as introducing a bill, having a hearing on it, and doing the whole nine yards that is necessary for a piece of legislation to be passed. This is not something that should be injected into the property tax debate at this juncture, because it simply is not the issue that's before us now and, frankly, I think it is ill-advised, both from a policy point of view and from a pragmatic point of view with respect to the legislation that we are talking about now. For that reason I would ask you to reject this amendment.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Will. Senator Kristensen. Senator Lynch.

SENATOR LYNCH: Governor (sic) Robak and members, I also stand to oppose it. I think the comments by Senator Warner and his experience with this kind of a process in the state is important for us to remember and how it applies to public employees in particular. You know so much for good will, good business, good faith and all of the rest of it, if this kind of an amendment is in fact successful. As a member of the Appropriations Committee I can tell you, as others on the Appropriations Committee I'm sure could testify to, that there have been times in the past and just recently a couple, three years ago, when what was in fact agreed to by the administration by the university and by employees and NAPE/AAFCSME, it was obvious that there may not be the money available to fulfill that commitment, which was agreed to, without the use of the CIR. The negotiating unit voluntarily took a cut. They agreed to take less money because they knew that for years through the CIR and the process of the CIR that the recommendation and negotiated benefits were in fact enough, especially in the light of the fact that the state simply could not afford any more without serious budget considerations. A lot of agencies didn't do that, but the employees themselves did. As you all know in Nebraska, because of the kind of state we are, whatever those benefits are that