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in Minnesota. And that was pretty much funded by local and insurance premium money. And at the end of 25 or 30 years, why some of those people had a pretty good nest egg built up there. So I am supporting the amendment. There were just a couple things there that I wanted to make sure that I was right on. Thank you, Senator Hartnett, and thank you, members.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Janssen. Senator Vrtiska, on the Hartnett amendment.

SENATOR VRTISKA: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body. I got to ask Senator...I would like to ask Senator Hartnett a few questions.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Would you yield, Senator Hartnett?

SENATOR HARTNETT: Yes.

SENATOR VRTISKA: First of all, Senator, in listening to the discussion, first of all this is voluntary or mandatory?

SENATOR HARTNETT: It's up to each...it's up to each...

SENATOR VRTISKA: It's up to each department?

SENATOR HARTNETT: It's up to each department, yes.

SENATOR VRTISKA: Okay. Well the reason I ask the question is, you know, I support the idea of doing things to try to get more people to become members and participate, because it's been difficult in many communities. However, by the same token we have communities that are having a difficult time to get enough money to provide the necessary equipment and stuff that they need to run a fire department, because they're small. The question I have more pertinent to this is, in many departments, and I was on the fire department for 39 years in my community. In many departments we have firemen who are willing to join the fire department and go to fires when they're there, but they work out of town, and they're not there a lot of the time. And I guess what I'm trying to find out, what kind of point system do they have that they have to...it's going to be up to the local department to determine if they're eligible? Or how does