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Senator Wehrbein waives off. Senator Kiel.

SENATOR KIEL: Yes, thank you, Senator Cudaback. Sorry (laugh), who are you. I rise in opposition to Senator Bromm's amendment, understanding that he may well withdraw it at some point. But there are a number of issues that I think need to be perhaps reiterated at this point. And one of them is, who is in the retirement system in the OPS system? It's not just teachers we're talking about here, we are talking about service employees also. Average classified member would be replacing about 37 percent of their wages, and of course when we are talking about service employees we are talking about the van drivers, the cafeteria workers, the janitors, all of those folks who do make much less, of course, than even teachers do in the system, and thus have much less to retire on. Typically, the classified members come to work for the system later in life, work fewer years, and retire at an older age than the certificated members do, which are the teachers. Now the 2 percent formula will help those folks have a more secure retirement. And again, as I said, typically the van drivers, the cafeteria workers and those folks do not make all that much and therefore do not have nearly as comfortable a retirement. One of the things that has been mentioned is a concern that teachers will be more likely to retire if we do this. One of the things that we have looked at is the number of teacher retirements over the years, and what we have found is typically the number of teachers retiring have pretty much stayed the same year after year. When the Rule of 85 went into effect, 20 more teachers retired in the system, and the very next year it went back to about an average of 80 to 85. Now, also want to remind my colleagues that we're not talking about state tax money here. There's not a penny of taxpayers money in this system. This is the money the teachers have put in and deserve to be able to have out in their retirement. We do not do a very good job in this country of encouraging people to save. So the way that we have people save is through their retirement fund, and that's what they are doing. As opposed to cutting back on their contributions to the pension fund, we ought to probably be encouraging them to put more in so that they are able to save and so that they are able to have a comfortable retirement. I'm going to share with you a letter that I received from a teacher in the OPS system. She gave me permission to use this letter. And she says, "I started