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field. They have a very diversified portfolio, which I think is extremely important. They have domestic stocks, international stocks, stocks and bonds, so that there can be shifts in the stock market without any dramatic shifts in this retirement fund. Yes, Senator Bromm said, do you expect that we might see the rest of the teachers statewide going towards the 2 percent? Yes, we would expect that. But again, the employees have been contributing their share of the money. This has been a decision, and I hope that this is something that I think that we do have good benefits for our teachers in Nebraska. And I think this is something that, you know, we also need to look at when we are looking at teachers salaries and the benefits that they receive. I think as a state we have been supportive. Can we reduce retirement benefits of employees after we have granted them? No, so that is one consideration. Once we set something, we can always raise it, but we cannot go back and lower those benefits. I believe that since we have passed the Rule of 85, yes, we have seen more teachers, I think, retire, but that is also leveling off. As Senator Kiel said, I believe that it will particularly help those certified employees who don't make a large sum of money, but will help them to contribute to their retirement. So I hope that that might help to answer some of the questions in regard to this issue. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Stuhr. Senator Bourne, on AM2549.

SENATOR BOURNE: Thank you, Mr. President, members. I, too, oppose the...Senator Bromm's amendment to reduce this back to 1.9, the multiplier. Anytime the Retirement Committee acts on increasing retirement benefits, their actions or the committee's actions are based on an actuarial study. As I understand it, even after we increase this multiplier to 2.0, assuming that's what we do, the fund will have tens of millions of dollars in reserve, so it's not like to raise the multiplier is going to put the plan in any sort of peril whatsoever. I just...I'm going to give you a little...a few examples to put this into real numbers how increasing the multiplier helps. Currently, let's start out this way, say we have an employee who retired after 30 years of service, and say his or her final compensation was \$1,000 a month. If...currently the system has a multiplier of 1.85, that would equal, without going through all the