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LB 1399

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Bohlke, due to the complexity of the subject, we will give you five minutes to explain to the body exactly what this bill does. Thank you.

SENATOR BOHLKE: I think I thank you, Mr. President. No, I do thank you. And, members, I had asked the Chair beings yesterday it was almost at closing time when we opened on the bill, and that many people had said they would appreciate a recap of some of the outline that I had given yesterday. As I opened on the...so I am sorry if it repeats it for some of you, and for those of you who have to listen to it again, you'll just, when we get to the assessment piece, you will get a hundred percent on testing if we do a test on this. But yesterday we did talk about, as we opened, the difficulty the committee had in deciding what we could accomplish this session and what we could not accomplish. I had said that generally we had heard from people a concern over keeping quality teachers in the classroom, and recognizing that quality teachers, you have to be competitive and that salaries were certainly an issue. That's the part that got a little difficult deciding if this session we would be able to do anything in determining the salaries. That, as I said yesterday, was probably the easier part actually, deciding if we need to do something or not. The real difficulty I said came with the Ws, and the Ws happened to be who, as we tried to discuss it, all teachers, only teachers in districts with greater needs than resources, only beginning teachers, only teachers who sign an 11-month contract. Or when, \$20 million was in the amendment, in LB 1399 in committee, and that amount would have come out of the Cash Reserve and would have been placed in a trust fund as a pledge or down payment for next year. However, we do not...however, how do we ask you for the money this year without being able to tell you who will receive the dollars or which school districts would qualify for helping increase teacher pay? Where, where do we get the money? And I talked about the different things in committee that we discussed in trying to find the source of the revenue and the difficulty with doing that this session, and if we even came up with a lump sum this session, the concern that we need an ongoing revenue, and they...I heard from many of you a concern that you did not want to return to the whole problem that we had with the HELP fund and turned out to be broken promises. It was one lump sum