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of this across the board and has there ever been any consideration of making a uniform kind of provision for care providers across the board? Should they all not be a certain level in the state employment ladder? I don't know. I'm just...I'm just asking.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Well, Senator Schimek, I don't know that there is, although we had quite an intense discussion in our committee on provider rates and I want to enlarge a little bit upon what I said. We did increase mental health provider rates of \$3 million and we also increased hospital reimbursements for another million and a half, and that's in Region VI. Probably doesn't get directly at the issue you're talking about, except we had that discussion in general and HHS was over. We, in fact, we had more than one meeting discussing these things because we had requests for larger amounts of money than this in the mental health field. I know that they are aware of these issues because...I mean it's popping up all over for us...

SENATOR SCHIMEK: I know.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: ...at the state level because we're in the human services area broadly, as you well know, and that's the area that's suffering for workers and we have wage problems or salary problems. So I know that they're looking at it but I don't know...I don't say that we've got a formal study, but we discussed it to the extent that we felt next year we were going to have to face this. In fact, some of the remarks I've made up here in the last couple weeks about next year's budget, this is one of the areas that I'm referring to, because we're getting outbid, so to speak, by fast food chains and everything else in this area and it's...it's a difficult area.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Thank you, Senator Wehrbein, and I...it was a great temptation a few minutes ago to vote for Senator Raikes' amendment, but I hated to just change horses in the middle of the stream, if you will, and...and change our policy without a little bit more thought given to it, I guess. But I am very, very concerned that the programs that we've established across the state in a lot of these areas are underfunded. There's just no question in my mind about it and, yet, we're talking about giving back another \$30 million to the taxpayers when we have a