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SENATOR PREISTER: ...but were someone to have heard what you just read, they might infer that. And, yes, please respond.

SENATOR LANDIS: Thank you. I thought you were kind to acknowledge areas of agreement, and let me do the same. I agree there is a second path to this result. You could do this by negotiation. You can get there. I acknowledge that, and I think that's the point of the letter. I acknowledge that. I acknowledge that I don't know the history, and I don't know that this was on the table and rejected. In fact, I don't think it was on the table and rejected. The normal course of business would not put this on the table in the middle of a contract negotiation. In fact, it would be a separate piece. I think the nurses, for example, was a separate piece the last time it was done. And it does represent a decision by the administration rather than going that way coming to the Legislature. I think these are things that you'd like to have the record reflect and I have no difficulty in admitting that those are all true. Now if you have a specific question for me let me also try to answer, but I think those are things that you'd want the body to know that I would not dispute. I think those are true.

SENATOR PREISTER: Okay. Then in saying that, I think what you're also saying is that there is nothing in the contract that would prohibit a separate kind of negotiation, and I don't believe there is anything that would prohibit even reopening the negotiations now that they are done. Would that be your understanding?

SENATOR LANDIS: Yes.

SENATOR PREISTER: Although it could be difficult, but there is nothing that prevents it.

SENATOR LANDIS: Right. There could be a meet and confer. There is authority in the contract to permit a discussion for things like this to occur. It could be done. This represents a decision to choose a different path. That path exists and this is a different path.