

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

February 6, 2003 LB 85

become much more costly and much more...with much more implications from the General Fund.

PRESIDENT HEINEMAN: Thank you, Senator Landis. Senator Beutler. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Beutler would move to amend by striking Section 1 of the bill. (FA1156, Legislative Journal page 447.)

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I don't really want to strike Section 1. I really want to be sure that this is satisfied and the question is not called until there has been a thorough debate on this matter. As I begin to hear some of the answers, I begin to wonder more and more about this bill. Senator Landis admits that during the month of February they could go back to the unions and negotiate. This bill would still be here. March is plenty of time to get to a bill at the top of the agenda. I'm sure the Speaker would agree to take it up again in the event that they were not able to resolve the matter. Senator Landis rightfully points out that the bargaining is done on a broad basis, not just the Insurance and Banking Department. But unless both parties agree, the general bargaining agreement is not opened up. We are not exposing ourself to more General Fund expenditure in any sense. In fact, I think they'd hate to open up, nobody wants to open up the whole bargaining agreement because the public employees would probably be afraid they'd get even less now than they agreed to earlier. So that's not going to happen. The only bargaining that would be done would be on this narrow question. And tell me, how would you feel if you were bargaining for the unions on this narrow question and LB 85 sits there like a gun at the back of your head? I mean they are going to have trouble enough bargaining with the administration on this without taking the whole bargaining process away from them. If there is some suggestion in Senator Landis' remarks that somehow the Director of Banking and the Director of Insurance wouldn't be involved in this negotiation, although technically they are not the negotiators, obviously they are going to be involved. It's all about them. They will be working hand and glove with the negotiators on a minute-by-minute basis. So I have yet to hear