

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

February 6, 2003 LB 85

occasions. What I don't know for sure is if we could avoid the problem that you were suggesting about increasing the use of general funds by negotiating and using the private funds to do that salary step or that increase that might be needed to retain these employees. And I'm...I have to tell you, Senator Landis, I think you've been very fair in your presentation, and I think we need to be very cautious here about stepping outside of the boundaries of that collective bargaining process too many times. I mean if we do it for nurses one time, and then we do it for bank examiners another time, and then we do for, you know, step-one employees on another occasion, then you've, eventually, you've totally emasculated the whole collective bargaining process. So I think we do need to be careful, but I'm just suggesting that maybe...we are talking about a very small group of employees here. Am I right? I mean is it about 25 or so employees? So I'd certainly be willing to have us try that in this case, and not use, if we could, try not to use the general funds and make that part of the bargaining process perhaps, and at the same time be able to protect these employees and keep them in the collective bargaining system, because if we don't do that, then those 25-some employees are at-will employees, and they don't have the same processes that other employees can go to if they have problems. And, you know, maybe some of them would choose to stay under the state personnel system. If they do that, then they can't have the increased wages, as I understand it. It becomes an either/or kind of situation for them. Anyway I understand where you're coming from. I respect that but I'm not going to vote, I'm still not going to vote to advance...

SENATOR ENGEL: One minute.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: ...this bill at this time. Thank you.

SENATOR ENGEL: Thank you, Senator Schimek. The Chair recognizes Senator Brown.

SENATOR BROWN: Mr. President and members, Senator Schimek just made the case of what the situation is right now, but, people, that the employees are choosing to stay at a lower salary because the increase that they would receive to move to a