

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

February 25, 2005 LB 503

association came in as a...in neutral testimony. I wanted to just share with you the increase, which is for the first year for the employees is 73 percent of 1 percent--.73. The increase for the second year would be .58 percent. For the school employers it would be .74 percent, and .59 percent for the second year. I do want to just mention it because Senator Synowiecki and Senator Bourne both have talked about the judges' situation a couple years ago. We had a situation in that case where there was no offsetting pay increase. We were asking for an increase in their contribution rate, but no corresponding increase in benefit. In the schools', in this situation, I believe that the percentage is so small that they would have to receive no pay increase to have that same situation that we had in the judges', and I don't see that happening because I believe that all of the school employees will receive some percentage of increase. We are talking about property taxes. I do...I was very pleased in the fact of just looking at our state budget and looking at the shortfall of \$15 million, which I know was going to have an impact. We know it is the state's responsibility, when we have a downturn in the investment markets, to cover. And we have not had this happen since...it was in the nineties. I can't tell you the exact year, but it's been a number of years. But the school...schools and the school employees did come forth on a willing basis to do this and cover this amount this year, knowing the budget crisis that we are still experiencing. I also appreciate the remarks that Senator Raikes had. I believe we're going to see an increase in school aid, which should help offset this increase to the schools. I will probably, reluctantly, be voting no on this amendment. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Stuhr. Senator Connealy, on the Bourne amendment.

SENATOR CONNEALY: Thank you, Mr. President, members. You know, we do get a lot of calls for going over the lid and exemptions and the like, and I really don't want to raise property taxes, but I think that this one fits. I think that it's short term. It's a part of the budget that's really something that was unforeseen, as we crafted this. It is abnormal. You know, I agree with Senator Raikes that we can't do it all; that we ought