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chair.

SENATOR LANDIS: I agree with Senator Chambers when he says there should be an exact number; that the citizenry has spoken that in fact they don't like floating numbers well. We've tried it a couple of times and I think they essentially want to make a decision-by-decision bargain with the Legislature. So, on that score, I agree with Senator Chambers. I supported the Stuhr amendment because I thought the number was right. It's the first time I've seen the number that I thought was right, and it's \$18,000. If there is some variation on that, that I think the public would do, I don't think it is the cost of living index, in which you could get to that problem by dividing the number from the COLA effect of the Stuhr amendment, although I support the Stuhr amendment because I think it pegs to the right number. If there's anything else that the public might do, I think it's in the area of benefits, but even that I think is risky because it's a moving target and they want us to ask them for everything we get, in my estimation. I would not do the poverty level. It's another form of moving target and COLA, even though it has the...(laugh) the high-water mark of using the poverty schedule, which I think is the rhetorical advantage to take here. It's the high ground to say, could we just match the poverty level? (Laugh) But I wouldn't do that. It's a moving target. I'd use 18,000 bucks, and if I would add anything to it, I would ask...I would add the Smith idea of benefits equal to a state employee. So I'm going to vote no on this one because it doesn't mention the direct number. The Stuhr amendment is the most correct that I've seen so far on the list of ones. If it was to be tweaked, I think it should be...we should change the COLA effect, and if there should be anything other than a straight number I think it should be the benefits idea from the Smith amendment. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Landis. On with discussion of the Smith amendment. Senator Jensen, followed by Senator Brashear. I'm sorry. Mr. Clerk, please, a motion on the desk.

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Kruse would move to amend Senator Smith's amendment. (FA297, Legislative Journal page 1705.)