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retirement funds. It has absolutely nothing to do with the contribution level or the percentage of contributions on behalf of teachers relative to their pay. It has absolutely nothing to do with it. Has absolutely nothing to do with the benefits involved. It simply indicates that if we have to go to a General Fund appropriation that we treat all teachers within the state equitably. I'm going to support Senator Bourne's amendment. I want to thank the Chair, and give the rest of my time back. Thank you, Senator Cudaback.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Synowiecki. Senator Schimek.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Yes, thank you, Mr. President and members. I'd like to ask Senator Bourne a few questions, if I might.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Bourne, would you yield?

SENATOR BOURNE: Certainly.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Senator Bourne, I thought I caught, while you were speaking, and I think even Senator Synowiecki said this, that this is a 60-year tradition.

SENATOR BOURNE: That's correct.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Can you tell me, if you know, and maybe you don't, how many occasions there have been when we've actually had to do this and dip into General Funds for the state retirement system and, therefore, we've also given to the Omaha retirement system?

SENATOR BOURNE: That's a very fair question, Senator Schimek, and I...but I do not know the answer. All I can say to you is that we passed a bill, I don't know if it's this bill or last year, that would do what I'm advocating for Omaha Public School teachers for the state, and it simply says that if you are going to contribute to the state teachers, we should make a similar contribution to the Omaha Public School teachers.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: I appreciate that, Senator Bourne, and I...it