

designed to save some money for the State of Nebraska in case this bill is enacted into law because it strikes the wording that provides for an automatic annual increase in the benefit levels for future years as proposed in the bill itself. Mr. President, I move the advancement of the amendment...adoption of the amendments.

PRESIDENT: Is there further discussion on the committee amendments? Senator Haberman, your light is on. Do you want to speak on this? Very well. Motion is to adopt the committee amendments to LB 290. All those in favor vote aye, opposed vote no. Committee amendments to LB 290 is what we are voting on, senators. The motion is to adopt them. Please record your vote. The Clerk will record the vote.

CLERK: 26 ayes, 0 nays on adoption of committee amendments, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT: Committee amendments are adopted. Now back to the bill. Senator Harris.

SENATOR HARRIS: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I want to let everyone in the room know right up front that this bill is going to cost some money. It is going to cost, in my estimation, big money, a half a million bucks is not small change, but it is for a very good reason and for a good cause. The bill would provide an adjustment in the benefit levels of retired University employees who entered into benefits under the retirement plan in effect to 1961. The adjustment would be based on the change in the University wage levels from June 1977, when the last adjustment took place, until 1985. This will right a wrong that has been done to these people, through no fault of their own, through no design by any of the system that is in place, or by any of the legislatures that have looked at this issue over a period of years. It simply is something that has happened. I will describe, very briefly, to you what happened. There are 964 people who are suffering from a severe economic hardship, they are called the old University retirees. When these University employees contributed to their pension fund, in the '40s and the '50s, they had no way of knowing the magnitude of the financial needs that they would have in 1985. The size of the economic hardship can be assessed by simply looking at the numbers. Under the pre-1961 pension plan 468 people receive