

year and this year, I can tell you that the increase, though large in total, for these individuals will be very small indeed. As I think Senator Harris has gone through, most of them are receiving a pittance of pay, in the range of \$100 or maybe up to \$200 for the most part. This would, perhaps, have an increase of, I don't know what the total percentage would be. But when we are talking about \$100 a month or \$150 or \$200 a month for these individuals, you are not talking about a major increase whatsoever. Nevertheless, as Senator Harris said, in many days gone by they served our state well in the University system, and have taken pay cuts when they were serving, and now in retirement they are facing a very, very desperate situation. They deserve better from this state. I support LB 290 because I think they deserve that help. Now the precedent to go back and help people that have already retired has been made in the past. We adopted, back in the early 1970s, a constitutional amendment to allow us to do that. We are able to go back and help people that have served the state or, as public employees, been able to serve some political subdivision in this state and go back and adjust their retirement benefits to recognize perhaps a poor retirement plan. So that has been an ability that we've had for many years. We've done it from time to time. In this case we've made an adjustment only a few years ago, and we are now taking the time, since that last adjustment, and adjusting for that period of time up to now that inflation has gone up and increasing their benefit appropriately. I don't think that is unreasonable. I think that is fair. Just to tell you, though, about the precedent last year we did pass a teacher retirement bill that was a massive, major improvement in the retirement plan that did say those people that were under an old retirement plan, although they were still teaching, would have their retirement plan upgraded to the current levels of retirement benefits. So it wasn't the past retirees that we adjusted, but it was the same concept, that they were under a lousy retirement plan and deserved better. We made that adjustment. It costs millions of dollars, and we thought it was the fair thing to do. This year this is an even worse situation. These people aren't getting \$500, \$600, \$700 a month. They are getting \$100 a month, \$150 a month. They deserve better and similarly ought to have that old retirement plan upgraded. I think also you should know that there is another bill that I've got to deal with all current retirees and their plans and because of that precedent, back ten years ago with that constitutional amendment, make a