

.the automatic increase some way, one way or another. But 1 percent per year is nowhere near cost of living as far as percentages are concerned. So consequently it is not a cost of living increase, it is an automatic increase of 1 percent per year to help the elderly, the retirees, in other words, meet the increasing costs of health care. Now why, for example, is it not necessarily a precedent setting venture we'll call it. This particular fund, which is the Omaha fund, paid for by the teachers of the Omaha system, and paid for by the school...the tax benefits of the Omaha school system, tax load of the Omaha school system, is a fully funded program. It is perfectly logical, for example, for us to give this to a fully funded program. Then if someone else comes along and says give us the same thing, we say is your fund fully funded? If it is, it is a well planned fund. Fine. If it is not a fully funded program then don't give it to them. That is the logical reason that Chris was asking for when he was saying if we don't have a logical reason we couldn't justify not giving it to everybody else. Well, we really should give it to everybody else that has a fully funded program. But if their program is not fully funded, then let's don't give it to them. That is our decision to make at the time any one of them asks for it. Other than that, there is really nothing else in the bill that is up for controversy. So I would suggest that we just make our decision based on the 1 percent, and let it go up or down, one way or the other on that, then go ahead with the bill.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. We're discussing the Beutler amendment on LB 215. Senator Vard Johnson.

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I think that the Beutler amendment raises a very tough issue. It certainly is tough for a person like myself who comes from Omaha who, in a sense, will be looked to by Omaha teachers to do the right thing on LB 215, which Omaha teachers and others conclude is to support the 1 percent annual adjustment contained in LB 215. I've done quite a bit of thinking on the 1 percent annual adjustment, and tried not to have a knee jerk reaction against the fledgling cost of living adjustment, which the 1 percent is, and have been appreciative of the fact that the 1 percent adjustment will be forward funded, meaning that the taxpayers of the Omaha school district and the teachers themselves, the employees themselves, will have, at the time of an