

and they're not too happy with me standing up here proposing this change, but I believe so strongly in the rightness of my cause and the justification for it that I'm willing to take whatever heat may come my way because I can stand up before anybody and show you the need for this change. It is justified. It is right and it is time that it be done. Now especially in light of the fiscal situation I think maybe some of you that in the past haven't given it serious thought ought to think about it now. The present plan that is being proposed by the Appropriations Committee would provide for, let me find that figure, again, if you look in my handout I do have a chart that has that. The present plan and general fund savings that the Appropriations Committee is promoting is about \$686,000. My approach would say \$1,221,000. That's almost double, not quite double, the savings. That's a substantial increase, over \$500,000 in additional savings. I'm not asking to take those savings and put them in the budget, the general fund or elsewhere. I'm saying whatever savings result from our health insurance proposal to change goes back to the employees in the forms of some sort of benefit, either a dental plan or a medical expense account or higher salaries or whatever. Any savings that we can make I think ought to go back to employee benefits. I am not trying to take that money from the employees, but I am saying to have a plan like this that is wasteful in excess cost is wrong for us to be promoting. It also wastes health care resources and does not promote cost containment in health care. So I'm not trying to take the money to save this money or to reduce our shortfall, I'm trying to do it because we need to recognize that health care cost containment must involve the consumer, must involve the employee and the only way you can do that is provide some sort of deductible or copayment.

SPEAKER NICHOL: One minute.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you. I hope that you have a chance to look through this handout. It does go through the history of the issue. You'll see very clearly that it's not a new one, it's not one that ought to be put off any longer. I think you will also recognize that the proposal that I am trying to suggest would start January 1 of this next year, not July 1, because it is so late in the session. To make the adjustment to this new plan, you would have to delay it a number of months but we go January 1 of this next year to this comprehensive plan and I have the figures that show the