

SENATOR ABOUD: And that's what you're going to have to be deciding here when we do take up Senator DeCamp and Senator Pappas's motion later on early retirement with full benefits. Do you want to discuss this issue dealing with state employees where it's going to come out of our state budget? Because I guarantee you, if we do adopt those particular amendments, you will have early retirement amendments placed on this floor of the Legislature this year and you will have to be deciding upon those issues. I can guarantee it. Because once it's through for one group, it's going to be coming through for us and whether we have the money there or not for this year or in the future, we're going to have to pay for it. It is so analogous to the situation the federal government is facing with Social Security where they have had tremendous problems because of the cost of living benefits that they have to pay out to recipients and the whole idea of deficit appropriations. They have sold down the future of our children by creating these deficits and we'll be using the same approach with this early retirement. So keep in mind when we're discussing Senator Johnson's amendment and then in the future Senator DeCamp's and Senator Pappas's motion what we're talking about. They are completely opposite subjects. They are not receiving the full benefits which they will receive when they are 65. Thank you.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Vickers, please, then Senator Lynch.

SENATOR VICKERS: Mr. President, members, retirement is a difficult issue to understand. I've only served on the Retirement Committee now for I think three or four years and I'm not sure that I understand all of the ramifications of issues pertaining to retirement system. But in the general concept that I think that the issue is before us that Senator Johnson is attempting to amend is one that says, you know, it is these people's money. It's their money. Even the employer's share that is deposited is deposited for them and what the Retirement Systems Committee was attempting to do with their amendment was to say to a state employee that for whatever reason might wish to retire at 55, that we would allow them to do so with reduced benefits. Now Senator Johnson is saying, no, it doesn't make any difference that the benefits are reduced. It doesn't make any difference if you're going to get a lot less money, we're not going to let you do it anyhow. I don't care if