

The final hearing on this, a very lengthy hearing, concluded less than two months ago because this was the subject of a special interim study. So it has not only had hearings specifically on the words but specifically within the last year, two complete hearings including a complete interim study. So I think that is a fair answer to that one. Another objection raised by Senator Johnson has to do with the fact that this might force out, might force out some teachers, and he expressed the value of experience. With respect to that, there is nothing in the bill, the proposal, that forces a teacher out, but let me not deceive you. That is one of my purposes, absolutely. I believe that there are teachers out there, and the teachers and I have battled on this issue for years, who should be forced out and there is no way to do it. Although this does not directly force any teacher out, it does have a doorway for them to go through when and if the pressure is put on them after a certain number of years and time. If I had my choice and I shall continue my war to do this, I would repeal teacher tenure and move to a strict system of merit, and only when that is done will we get the best teachers, the best qualified teachers, and the best quality in our schools. The teachers oppose me on this. They are always successful. That is one of the reasons I am sponsoring this particular proposal because it is one way for me to break down, even if only indirectly, the overall tenure system. It is one way for me, as one individual, to try to say this is one method to clean out some of the teachers and to lower, I repeat, lower property tax cost. If there is anybody concerned about property taxes, I think it is me. And so you have this kind of unusual confluence of supporters and opponents on this bill. I am sponsoring a bill which I think lowers costs even though it gives some of the things some teachers or, I should say, the administrators want. And so you have a John DeCamp sponsoring it and opposed by Chris Abboud. You have a Vard Johnson and a David Landis opposing the amendment when traditionally you would expect them to be supporting it. What I am suggesting to you...

SPEAKER NICHOL: One minute.

SENATOR DECAMP: ...is probably on this particular issue there is a compromise in the middle and this is it. It is an economy measure. It is a business way of addressing teachers retirement and, eventually, eventually in here there will be repeal of tenure one way or another and then