

61 years old suffering from a cancer condition and his call was the very same thing. Senator, I don't know how much longer I can keep on working, but I absolutely can't afford to quit because I cannot get insurance coverage, and he was willing to pay for it. Just the fact that he could not get coverage and he did have to continue his employment. Thanks.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Abboud, please.

SENATOR ABOUD: Mr. President, colleagues, I think Senator Morehead has raised some very valid points in dealing with this amendment and I'm sure she is very sincere in her desire to provide this additional coverage to the state employees. But I really don't want to talk too much about the particular amendment, but I would like to focus in on one of the points that has been raised, I believe by Senator Morehead in support of the amendment, and that is that this particular provision of the retirement system which they want to add for state employees has already been given to the teachers of this state. And I think it's important to remember in the overall scheme of the retirement systems that we discuss here on the floor of the Legislature, that once a provision in a retirement package is given to one particular group such as an early retirement provision as has been discussed giving to the school districts of the state, it eventually ends up before the other public employees. And I think we have to remember that, that the entire retirement system is interrelated. Just because you give it to one small group, the result is that eventually it is going to end up being offered to some other group or being pushed to be given to some other group. So remember the words that were spoken by Senator Morehead in regards to this particular amendment, that it has been given to one particular group and that as a result, since it has been given to one other group and it's working fine for that group, that we should give it to the state employees, and I think I'm going to be using this argument when we discuss early retirement once again. Thank you, Mr. President.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Morehead, would you like to close on your amendment, please.

SENATOR MOREHEAD: Mr. President and members of the body, I urge you to adopt this amendment. Like Senator Labeledz said, we probably will not see the light of day on the other bill.