

field. I'm not sure what power the Legislature has over whoever negotiates with those employees. The only authority and power we have is when we spend the money. Then that is where the Hannibal argument takes over. That will always continue to exist. I know that Senator Nelson is concerned with the 3 percent increase. I'm sure, in whatever form this bill may or may not appear on the floor, she'll probably, based on the economy in Grand Island, maybe not support a 3 percent increase. So what we do is we'll have nothing to do at all with that. But that points out something that is so vital and important you see. There are those that maybe have predetermined, I'm not saying Senator Nelson has, in their own mind that politically they know they are going to have to oppose a 3 percent increase. That is why it puts us sort of at a crossroads with this legislation. We always will and have come back to basically the concept and the principle that should be the rightful thing and the ability of the employees, and that is to negotiate on their own behalf. If you are a farmer you joined a farmers union, the Grange, or whatever. If you raise hogs you try to get a check-off so you can do something about legislation. People negotiate. They negotiate knowing that they can only do it through strength, and they can only gather strength by belonging to an association, or a union, or whatever else it might be. The counties, the cities put together associations so that there common interests can be upheld. We shouldn't, on this floor, allow us to say we take away the rights of those people, whoever they might be, an individual state employee, an association, or whatever, to negotiate in their own behalf, until we are ready, until we think we've got the level playing field and we think we've got the strength to do what we want to do. So please don't confuse the fact that we support the 3 percent increase if we can afford it. Congratulate the Appropriations Committee for putting together something that indicates a way to go about that. Don't be confused by those who will ultimately oppose a 3 percent increase in whatever form of vehicle we have. Only keep in mind that our concern has to do with the rights as established in the law, that was determined by the Supreme Court now, not a year from now, not two to three years from now. I would urge you to support the motion to send it back to committee.

SPEAKER NICHOL: The question is the adoption of the Lynch amendment. All those in favor vote aye, opposed nay. Have