

you all voted? Record, Mr. Clerk, please.

CLERK: 12 ayes, 18 nays, Mr. President.

SPEAKER NICHOL: The motion fails. Do you have anything else, Mr. Clerk?

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Schmit would move to amend the bill. (Senator Schmit's amendment appears on page 1494 of the Legislative Journal.)

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Schmit, please.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President and members of the body, my amendment is, as I indicated to you earlier, a proposal that will remove the 3 percent increase that is included in the bill. I have told you briefly in my earlier discussion that I do not know, I have no way of knowing what the CIR would do if they were to negotiate this kind of a situation. But I would suggest that I think that perhaps there are factors in the marketplace that would indicate that we have not had any substantial reasons for a salary increase. In fact, the projections for petroleum costs, for food costs continue to be lowered. With that as reality, it does not seem to me to be in good keeping with good housekeeping practices to provide a 3 percent salary increase across the board for state employees at this time. I know there are going to be some good arguments in support of the increase and I have heard many of them. And, as I have said earlier, I am not one who has a closed mind. If you can convince me, then I am willing to listen. I do not enter this arena with that point of view that says I am right and you are wrong and I will not bargain or I will not negotiate. What I am saying is that I have heard from the country, I have heard from many entities of government, all of whom are experiencing the same difficulties that we are. It does not seem to me when I review the salary schedules of state employees that those salaries are behind what we pay in the private sector. I have always been and I will always be a strong proponent for paying good salaries to good employees for high performance work. And I don't think that is inconsistent with business. It is not inconsistent with private industry. It is not inconsistent with what you would do in your own industry, your own business. I would ask you, yourself, those of you who are in a business, if you are going to increase the salaries of your employees this coming