

Forget about it. My good friend, Senator Vard Johnson, said it would be better to not tax farmers because there are so many loopholes jumped through by nonfarmers that we would be better off to not tax farmers at all and he was probably right. The point I want to make is this, that given the present scenario at the federal level, we can look for further deterioration within this state unless we do something ourselves. There are some proposals here on the floor that will address that and if those proposals are adopted and the things turn around, I will be the first person to stand on this floor and ask for substantial wage improvement for employees. I have always done it. I was one of the few people who voted for the original CIR bill and I took some flack for it. I don't regret it. The results have been good. The results have been good for the taxpayers and good for the citizens of the State of Nebraska and good for the employees. But there comes a time, as Senator Hannibal has said, the rules have been changed a bit, therefore, I suggest that we take out the 3 percent salary increase at this time and take another look at the entire structure. I would support the bill because I believe that at the point we are at right now we need to take another long look at the entire CIR process. Thank you very much.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Warner, please, then Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WARNER: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I would rise to oppose the amendment to make it a zero increase. Before I comment on that, I want to clarify two things that have been said before. It was stated on the floor that the provisions of the Constitution is not a threat, that is just...that is a fact. The fact is the Legislature does not have to appropriate money ordered by an agency of government to do it. That is not a threat, that is a fact. That is what the Constitution says. It should not be deemed as a threat. You should understand the Constitution and then you know what you have to abide by. The other thing, the court decision did not order the Legislature to do it. In the language it is very clear what may be a proper recourse available to the petitioners or a permissible response by the Legislature to the order of the CIR establishing wages for agency or department employees are matters not presently before the court and the purpose of this whole other issue was to put a structure and provide