

a legislative response. Now, on the salaries, back in 1977-78 we enacted legislation and provided a framework to try and keep employees' salaries, state employees' salaries compatible, not competitive, compatible with like positions in the private and governmental section within the state. To accomplish that policy, there is a salary survey that is conducted annually in which the various positions in state government, and there are certain positions selected which are then compared on a cooperative basis with a variety of private institutions, private companies as well as governmental subdivisions to find out what is the compatibility of the state salaries as with the market from which those employees are employed. It has been going on ever since those... '77 or '78 when it was enacted. Based upon the survey that was conducted July 1 of 1985 which at the time this budget takes effect will be 12 months old, the beginning salaries based on the survey was 3 percent below what was compatible with like positions outside of state government when the average state employees were 8 percent below similar positions outside of state government. So the minimal 3 percent increase, which is now 12 months old, or will be 12 months old when it takes effect, merely brings up beginning salaries, doesn't begin to address the overall average which state employees are behind the market of 8 percent. There still will be a 5 percent gap plus whatever changes have occurred since July 1 of 1985. The basis for the adjustment is minimal. It is to at least stay somewhere within the framework of that salary survey at the low end. I would urge you to reject the amendment and accept at least 3 percent which does reflect accurately the minimum amount of adjustment that could be made so at least beginning salaries are at a compatible level even though we are still far short of being compatible on the average.

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

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you. Mr. Speaker and members, I would also oppose this amendment. Senator Warner said we do a salary survey. We set it up and attempt to try and, as he said, be compatible with our salaries for state employees so that we can have a situation where we are paying them fairly, not necessarily too much or even in the same level but at least in the ball park so that we are not losing ground in that area. I think clearly we have a serious problem with our economy across the state. Senator Schmit