

probably...someone has probably suggested to you the purpose of this amendment has something...or the law rather, the proposed law has something to do with trying to have an economic impact on what state employees will be paid. Now, let me say categorically, I've repeated it several times on the floor, and I would hope those outside would understand, that that is not a part of the issue at all. There is no reason for this provision to be in there because it somehow or other is a curtailment upon employees, state employees, from having fair and just compensation, which they already are low. I will not argue that. What we are trying to do is to put in some time so that the structure for that bargaining can be done in an orderly fashion, both for their protection as well as for the state's protection, an equitable way to go about it. It is unstructured now. The potential, without a structure in the statutes, in which particularly the CIR is to be addressed, the potential is to create far more difficult problems than anybody wants both for the state and/or for the employees. If your goal is to prevent local government employees from having access to the CIR, because of...you don't want them to be able to get a raise, fine, you ought to put that in a separate bill. The provisions of 1250 have absolutely nothing to do, absolutely nothing to do with whether or not state employees are to have adequate salaries through the CIR this year. What it has only to do is to get the structure that negotiations can be conducted, which is not now present and that in trying for a couple, three years, you've had Governor's task force, it is not in place yet. That is all it's for. The way the bill is written, that if the Legislature does not enact the statute next year to put it into effect, then it is wide open. We let happen what may happen. But I don't think it is good for the employees, I don't think it is good for the state to intentionally let happen what may happen when there is an opportunity to put in some structure that will be beneficial and fair to all sides of the thing. That is all we are trying to do. So I would hope you would vote down the amendment offered by Senator Vickers because there is no need, there is no need to restrict local employees because the structure is in place there. Circumstances are different. There is no need to change the statutes, particularly no need at all, basically, to change the statutes relative to governmental subdivision employees. But there is a need to have something in place for the state. That is the purpose of LB 1250. It is not one to prevent, because of difficult economic times, to prevent