

SENATOR DEKAMP: Mr. President, the amendment is eminently simple. I'm not even sure this is the right time to try it. But the way things are moving, this may be the time, at least to get a feel, so to speak. The amendment would simply delay the pay raise, the 3 percent, until January. We've all discussed it. It looked to me, yesterday, like there is going to be a pay raise. I'm not sure 3 percent is the right number. And I'm not sure ultimately things won't happen that change it. But as a reasonable compromise, with both sides being pretty well guaranteed, if they'd lock something in place, a January date and a savings of what, between 5 and 6 million, maybe about 5.5 million on a one-time basis for this particular year, that would seem something that would not be inappropriate and I'm not giving any arguments one way or the other. I think you know the arguments. The arguments are you buy time. You buy a little bit of time and you save \$5.5 million so you can use it somewhere else, and you may prevent probably, or a big portion of preventing a tax increase. I think it is a reasonable settlement. But, as I said, I haven't...I've done no work on the issue in terms of lining up votes. So it is kind of like throwing the dart against the wall, which I don't normally like to do. But, if nothing else, it would get a quick test on mood or attitude on it for maybe something later.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Warner, then Senator Marsh.

SENATOR WARNER: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, certainly one of the options that are available is something different in the way of salary policy. The problem, and we've done it before, but the problem you are creating with a delayed date of January 1, while it saves you 5.5 million this year, it builds in an annual...when you annualize it July 1 of next year that then you have built in an automatic \$5.5 million increase in next year's budget. Now, maybe that is not such a problem except if you go the route of a 3 percent reserve and use up all the extra money that some are advocating, and revenues run short, there is 9 million of one-time money being advocated, instead of 5.5 you've 9 million on top of it, that is 14.5 million you've got to find if the reserves are not adequate, which you have to get back up to 3 percent. You may be adding another obligation. And I would just merely suggest that if you want to vote for this, you must understand that, number one, the potential of even a greater problem, a continuing revenue expenditure