

problem for next year is being added to to the tune of \$5.5 million. We already have the potential, with some of the proposals that have been made relative to the total budget this year, of creating that situation in some dollar amount anyway. So it just merely adds to the problem that you probably could be creating. So I would urge that if...that you would not adopt the amendment because of those reasons and, secondly, I would also oppose it for the other reason that a 3 percent adjustment on an annual basis is a relatively minor adjustment when you look at what the salary surveys have shown where state employees, as of July 1 of last year, were 8 percent below on the average, 8 percent below comparable paying positions within the State of Nebraska. So I would urge you not to support the amendment.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Marsh. Okay, Senator DeCamp's light was the only other one on and he can close. So, thank you. Senator DeCamp to close. Thank you, Senator Marsh.

SENATOR DECAMP: I respect Senator Warner's opinions, however, I will deal with the specific arguments he raised. The main argument was you are not saving anything for next year because you've still locked in for next year 3 percent in the base of next year's budget. He's absolutely correct, and I could accept that argument if he were then saying, and so we should reduce the amount to 2 percent, or 1.5 percent, or something like that because the 3 percent is locked in for next year's base, whether you implement it January 1 or July 1. So I would think that falls flat. You are locking in the base automatically by sticking with the bill. The only way to alter that is to actually reduce the amount, let's say, from 3 percent to 2 percent, then you've locked in a base of 2 percent next year, or from 3 percent to 1 percent, something like that. But to say, but to say that you've locked in the base, that is self-evident with whatever increase you do. As I pointed out, it is a 5.5 million savings for this year, no question about it. Maybe it's not going to be necessary. I'll be honest with you, if I were the public employees, and if I believed I had 30 solid votes all the way across, I'd say this is a dumb amendment and, DeCamp, stick it in your ear. But if I had any doubts as a public employee, if I had some reservations about where I was going to end up in this whole process, I'd say a locked in 3 percent for next year and a little delay this year, where you solidify your position, and I believe this would solidify it, ain't a bad deal and I'd suggest