

point is that if you detract from the retention of qualified people, at whatever agency you are talking about, the long-term impact is a deterioration of those services, and the prudent approach is if you insist on reducing the budget is to reduce the scope of government, and then maintain the quality for what you have left, and the route that you are going, if you adopt these kinds of amendments, you...

SENATOR CARSTEN: Time.

SENATOR WARNER: ...will get general deterioration across the board and the long term impact is not going to be beneficial.

SENATOR CARSTEN: Thank you, Senator Warner. Senator McFarland, please, on the Schmit amendment.

SENATOR McFARLAND: Thank you, Mr. President. Fellow colleagues, I rise to oppose the amendment. I think our state employees are very loyal, very hardworking people from the State of Nebraska. I have represented a number of them in my legal practice. I find that they deserve the amount of pay that they get and I think that it certainly is inappropriate to award that loyalty and that hard work with another minimal, in this case, nonexistent increase in their salary. As an example, these people pay taxes. They have families to support. They have bills to pay just like you and I do, and these people are just not nonentities. They are people that need the increase to meet their expenses as well. As an example, my administrative aide as a state employee, right now she is the only aide that I have. I do not have a legislative aide. She is in effect handling more than her share of the work but yet the reward that we will give her if this amendment is adopted is no increase in salary whatsoever. I think we can be to a degree pennywise and pound foolish concerning state employees. If we do not give them the 3 percent raise, in effect I think the trend will continue where state employees opt out and go into the private sector where they can make better wages, and in effect we function, the state will function as a training ground for private business. I think this has happened in the past, and if this amendment is adopted, it will only happen further, so that, in effect our state employees who get the training, who can do the work, do it efficiently, cost effectively, when they don't get a raise, they opt out. They get another job in private business and we have to hire someone else and retrain that person to take their place. Therefore, I think if we are going to keep our government operating efficiently, keep the loyal state employees