

legislative...the legislative pay plan in comparison to the state pay plan. That's the pay plan that was adopted in 1983 and what it would have done to date. And you can see the starting...the beginning, administrative assistants in 1983, it was somewhat comparable, slightly above the state pay plan of about a \$300...\$300 better, so to speak. And now that gap has grown to about \$4,000 better than what the legislative pay plan is. You go to committee clerks and legislative aides and research analysts, some legal counsels and the data processing analyst and in everyone of those cases our legislative pay plan is far superior than the comparable of other aspects of state government. And you can make a compelling argument, as Senator Warner already attempted to do, and I'm sure Senator Chambers will follow, about the specific cases of legislative staff persons serving at the whim of senators and I'm not saying there are any people that deserve more than that but the problem is this, and it's very difficult for this body to sit here and say, no, we're...well, saying no to state employees, one, we're not even fully funded in their bargained agreement. We're short of that for state...for all state employees in higher ed and in state government. And, secondly, it's one of those things that how can you justify treating yourself that much better than everybody else? And I don't think you can. I just think it's awful hard to go around and say, well, we are going to give our employees a bigger raise than everybody else. Now I cannot think of a time in the 10 years, 11 years now that I've been around this Legislature where legislative employees have been treated worse than state employees and probably, I don't know, maybe not every year but certainly most years legislative employees are treated better than other state employees as exemplified in what I just passed out. And, true, we're in a fish bowl and we do hear, as we all are painfully aware of with our desks and our chairs, it's just one of those things that I don't think you can really justify treating our own staff far superior to the way we treat other aspects of state government. And, yes, they're important. And I'm sure there will be members that will sit there and say, if you vote no against this amendment, you're saying your staff's not worth it. If you vote no on this amendment, you're not recognizing all the intricacies of legislative staff compared to the other state employees but it's just one of those things where how can you really justify having a far better plan for our employees than other employees. And not to mention the fact that in recent years, at least, it's not been a special appropriation that has accomplished this more aggressive pay scale. That has been accomplished through