

strangely enough, however, the hospital which has one of the second largest number of Medicaid patients is a profit operation. It currently pays income tax, it currently pays sales tax and yet it is able to provide for services that are provided by other hospitals and in a competitive way and I think it doesn't, just simply doesn't hold water to make the argument that the rest of the system is more unique than the one profit operation that we have. As people tell you not to vote for these measures, I hope you ask them what their alternative is, if they have one. As I recall, probably the most general comment I've heard is, well, this is a general social requirement of the public at large and whatever ought to be done ought to be done with general tax rate increase which almost everybody has sworn not to support, although I have introduced LB 21, sits in committee, and we provide that opportunity. The problem is not going to go away. I'm going to repeat again, this is not an issue that you're going to solve with cuts. It's not an issue that can be short-term solved with cuts. I can be short term but not long term and if we fail to take some action on the revenue side, and if that revenue isn't tied somewhat to the...to a growing base that matches the growing cost in Medicaid, all you're going to end up doing is several repetitions of the same situation we're in this year, each year from now and then on into the future. That's the opening on the committee amendment, Mr. President. I have, I believe, an amendment to the committee amendment.

SPEAKER BAACK: Mr. Clerk, an amendment to the committee amendments.

ASSISTANT CLERK: Mr. President, I do have amendments to the committee amendments. As primary introducer, Senator Warner has the first amendment to the committee amendments. It's AM1996. (See pages 2058-60 of the Legislative Journal.)

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Warner.

SENATOR WARNER: Mr. President, I'm sorry to take this long on this as I'm doing, but I tend to consider the discussion on these issues far more significant than just what may happen to them because what we're really beginning to talk about is the ability to fund state government and the various services, not only for this year but on down into the future. These amendments basically are technically corrections in a sense to the committee amendments or refinements basically and do not