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April 11, 2000 LB 149, 1107

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: Mr. President, members of the body, this may seem like kind of an unusual override because all the other overrides you're going to see this afternoon have an A bill attached to them. Somebody is going to tell you that they are going to want to spend additional money in some specified amounts that are set out in an A bill. There isn't any A bill for LB 1107. Now I'm not going to tell you that LB 1107 won't at some time have a fiscal impact, either near or distant, and we may have some discussion about that. LB 1107 is intended, as a matter of fact, to have a fiscal impact, but it has no A bill. I think perhaps the first thing we should do this afternoon is talk about what the objections to LB 1107 are. Some of them are familiar. Now one of them that was mentioned in the Governor's veto message, and I'll paraphrase a little bit, but he doesn't wish to have a portion of the state budget placed on autopilot, and the portion he's talking about is the portion that is dedicated to state aid for schools. I am...continue to be baffled by...and I use that word advisedly. I could say perplexed, filled with wonderment, confused. I could use a whole series of other adjectives about that discussion because if a portion of the state budget is on autopilot for support of state schools it has been that way since LB 1059, in effect. Some of you weren't here, but when we passed LB 1059, this Legislature did, I wasn't here either, then it was ratified by the people of the state of Nebraska, we dedicated one cent of the sales tax to state aid for schools and we dedicated what at the time was a 20 percent increase in the state income tax to support for schools, and every year faithfully that amount of money was appropriated for schools. Every money...every year, faithfully, we appropriated that amount of money for schools. Now there was another component to state aid to schools at the time. It was an old residual fund. It was about \$130 million and one year we did cut that. But we faithfully adhered to the will of the people and dedicated or appropriated what amounted to one cent of the sales tax and that old 20 percent increase in the income tax. We did that every year. Then we passed LB 806 and the LB 1059 structure no longer made sense, so our response was that we would adopt LB 149, which this Legislature did last year and overrode the Governor's veto at that time because the Governor's objection was that it was going to be on autopilot. But the members of this Legislature, very sensibly I think, overrode his veto because if we didn't appropriate the amount of