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spending in an isolated sense. You have to look at state spending and local spending all together and then make a judgment about whether government spending has been too great or too little. Because obviously this year the state budget is going to be a little higher than normal because we're picking up property tax expenditures and hopefully, theoretically, and I think in fact, the local school district budgets should level off or be less. So keep those factors in mind as you consider what we've done with the budget this year. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Senator Thompson, followed by Senator Chambers.

SENATOR THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the...Mr. President, members of the body. We are working on getting, as you know I always have a one-pager on every bill and we'll get that to you, which explains the details of the teacher...the Attracting Excellence to Teaching bill that was passed by the Legislature last year. What happened last year is we passed the bill. It was part of a package that the Education Committee put together with three things. One was the Teacher Salary Task Force; one was this bill; and the third was the Attracting...or the Master Teacher Program that awarded a bonus to teachers who had achieved national certification. The Governor vetoed the money out of this bill after it passed and in his veto message said that he wanted to look at some of the big picture on the whole teacher shortage issue and wanted to wait for the teacher task force report to come out, and this is the Teacher Salary Task Force report. They recommended funding this program. Also, the 3-R Task Force, which is a Task Force that was created by the Nebraska Department of...was...was run by the Nebraska Department of Education but created by the State Board of Education, also worked for two years on recommendations dealing with the teacher shortage issue and has also recommended funding for this program. I don't see this as an either/or type of a proposal. I introduced a bill, an appropriations bill, this year to fund it. The Appropriations Committee had a hearing on the bill and the Appropriations Committee did fund this for two years. In the Governor's proposed budget, he funded it for the second year only. So this isn't coming out of left field. This was not under...not without the light of day.