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FLOOR DEBATE

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struggling to fund an adequate education for their young people. I have a bill that's going to look at school reorganization, LB 680. It's a priority bill I don't think is going to see the light of day, but that's one of the areas we have to look at, and I think the Education Committee recognizes. The other thing is the aid to individuals, and you move across the page...or once again on page 21, showing a 10.8 percent increase in aid to individuals led by Medicaid and public assistance and developmental disabilities, and the higher ed is a peculiar situation that Senator Raikes had. We added \$4 million in that because of the recognition that...of aid to...scholarships. But I think if you'd thumb through here and find out, you know, there's no state aid for the State Fair. There is no state aid support for the Nebraska State Fair, an institution that's been here since the 1860s. Nothing is going in from the state of Nebraska to the Nebraska State Fair, for example, and we've taken a few other agencies to zero, and I know some of those will come back and probably will be discussed later. But it isn't that we haven't run a very tight budget on many organizations. As I mentioned earlier, we've cut NETV. We've cut down extensively the State Historical Society, many of our long-time institutions. And so as we come here, I would urge you to at least advance this one more, one more...one step...

SPEAKER BROMM: One minute.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: ...ahead and decide what kind of a vision of Nebraska are we going to have, even those are difficult times, and how much of this generation of young people, whether they be in K-12 or whether they be in higher ed, are we going to leave to fend for themselves because we are not going to give them the kind of education they deserve over the next few years? I know we can argue forever about what should be done, whether we're getting efficient education and so forth and so forth. That is truly debatable, but I think we at least have to admit it takes some money. And there may be more efficiencies and, as I tell many people that talk to me, they need to go to their local school boards. All need to get involved in this because...especially when their property tax is involved. But this represents that shift that we've been working on for several years of sales and income tax replacing property tax,