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LB 320, 407, 759

not making any illusions about what's in this proposal. If you ask me why we did what we did...and I say "we," my legislative aide and myself...when comparing the numbers, I can tell you. I can also tell you that we're increasing the amount of money for this year that goes into the state ward of education by \$1.2 million over last year. And then you go in the out years, and that's the discussion about, can we not effect, if you will, some reform, can we not effect some cost savings, can we not figure out a way to try and control some of those costs? If the answer is no, then we obviously have to come back in. But I think it's a piece of the solution that also could be looked at as a part of this discussion. The end result of LB 407, in my opinion and my opinion only, needs to be one that when the citizens of the state of Nebraska point to the slip law and say, here's what it says, they'll see a few things. And one, first and foremost, they'll see outlined priorities. I can tell you percent reductions between my number and the Appropriations Committee numbers. I can tell you percent reductions...I mean, I...

SPEAKER BROMM: One minute.

SENATOR ERDMAN: ...can go through all of that if you would like. But I think within that same discussion is a similar discussion that we had on LB 759 on the first round, and that is earmarks and other things that are being used for a purpose now, that if we honestly asked ourself, would we be doing those things today, we probably would not. And if we have given agencies the opportunity to generate revenue elsewhere, should we not also take that into consideration in our budget? We have bills out here that are helping to solve this problem. LB 320 helps solve the judges shortfall in the retirement fund. We also have another bill out here that potentially, if it comes up this year, could raise the court fees another nine or ten dollars. Those dollars are going to be earmarked. But the reality is, is that I think we owe it to ourselves to look at every efficiency possible, and to use some of those as complements to solving our budget shortfall. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER BROMM: Thank you, Senator Erdman. Senator Raikes.