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FLOOR DEBATE

March 22, 2004      LB 1093

will be laid over, Mr. President.      That's all that I have.  
(Legislative Journal pages 1179-1183.)

SENATOR CUDABACK:      Thank you, Mr. Clerk.      We're now back to discussion of the committee amendments offered by the Education Committee, AM2792 to LB 1093.      Open for discussion, Senator Schimek.      I'm sorry, your light went out.      Did you wish to speak, Senator Schimek?      She waives that opportunity.      Further discussion?      Senator, there are no lights on.      Senator Raikes, you're recognized to close on the committee amendment, AM2792, to LB 1093.      Senator Raikes.

SENATOR RAIKES:      Thank you, Mr. President, members.      Again, this is the committee amendment that would extend the \$1.05 school levy maximum and the temporary need adjustment from what it currently is, namely being in place for the current biennium, to three years beyond that.      So it would cover the following biennium and then one year beyond that.      I would tell you I think this is absolutely the minimum responsible thing to do fiscally, in my viewpoint.      As Senator Chambers pointed out, the committee made this decision before we knew about the most recent revenue forecast which, as you now know, dropped revenues for another hundred...by another \$104 million, and before there was even more certainty about a low-level waste judgment.      Even in spite of not knowing those things, certainly the situation fiscally has gotten worse since the committee made this decision.      So certainly, as I say, this is an absolute minimum.      I think it would be irresponsible for the body not to move forward with this, and I'm speaking now I guess more about the bill than I am necessarily the committee amendment because the signal would be that beginning in the next biennium we're going to drop the school levy and eliminate the temporary aid adjustment when all signs indicate that they need to go in the opposite direction.      The temporary aid adjustment needs to be in place, and if there's a change in the maximum school levy, fiscal prudence would suggest that it needs to go up.      So, again, this, the committee amendment, is something that I think you'll support even if you don't support the bill from the standpoint that this is a three-year extension rather than an indefinite extension.      But certainly I urge you to support the committee amendment.      Thank you.