

full tilt, with a full 2½% we spend \$602,186,787 or only \$138,234 above the 7% figure. Now we have yet to go through the remaining A bills that are on the chart. I can not help but believe that for those that want to keep this state within a total 7%, that won't accept a 7.01% or a 7.02% increase, you can find \$138,000 in remaining A bills to come up. But I think in the end what is most important is the fact that this body really does recognize the importance of this very important form of property tax relief to our county governments. This body I think recognizes that the State of Nebraska is the one calling the shots on medicaid not the county government and given the fact that it is the State of Nebraska calling the shots on medicaid the state should be picking up that cost, not the county government. To me a 2½% reimbursement reduction per annum for the next four years is a very sensible approach to slowly winding down county involvement in a program that the counties have no control over. We should live by that. For that reason I definitely urge this body to reject the amendment and to go with 138 as drafted and as was originally approved apparently by the Governor's office, and if we do crack the 7% lid by a smidgen of a percentage point, so be it, that is the way it should be because we are really doing what is right for the state government. Now this morning as part and parcel of the overall package, of which I was not a part, in which many of us were not a part, we have put in a chiller, an item I think with which most of us disagree. But it is there. We have done a number of other things in the appropriations budget, we have put in more bricks and mortar than we probably need, and in fact I voted against the Eppley Institute right in my own home district because I can not help but believe that the most important thing for us to do today with the overall appropriation measures is to take care of the county medical assistance reimbursement program. It is for us to make certain that we do give the counties the kind of relief that they ought to have been having since the thing first came into being. Now we get the counties out of the medicaid program in total. Now we were not part of that package this morning. If you had problems with the package this morning you ought to have more problems this afternoon. You ought to repudiate the Carstens amendment and go about the business of enacting 138 into law.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Schmit.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President, members of the legislature. It is not often that I rise in opposition to an amendment offered by my good friend Senator Carsten. I want to paraphrase what Senator Johnson has said. You know sometimes I think that some of my friends here ought to have some week-end jobs, it would keep them busy and it would keep them out