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LB 535

SENATOR KAHLE: Mr. President, members, I rise to support Senator Koch, I think. I would like to ask a question or two of Senator Warner if he would yield. Would this mean that the Appropriations Committee would do much less on the second year than it is doing now and just review perhaps lightly the appropriations from the year before?

SENATOR WARNER: Senator Kahle, as I visualize it it would primarily be identical to what we do now. Now there are two things done in the budget process. One, the Legislature puts funds as a matter of policy into certain programs. The second thing we do for the budget is provide the money for mechanics for salaries, for goods, whatever that is purchased to implement that policy. What I am saying is that from a program basis you ought to alert an agency more than three months ahead of time that you are going to make a policy change from a program basis. There is absolutely nothing in this that prohibits us nor would it be...have any effect on what we do annually to adjust salaries, to adjust for the price of travel, whatever those incremental things are that goes into providing the people for the services. Programs though we would be indicating further ahead and that is just good management. You don't decide what corn to plant the day before you go to the field. You do it several months ahead of time what you are going to do.

SENATOR KAHLE: Aren't you already doing that to a degree?

SENATOR WARNER: That is right. That is what I am telling you. This does not make...I do not do this as a substantive change from the process we now have but it would enable us to be a little firmer on a program basis.

SENATOR KAHLE: Thank you, Senator Warner. Well I have mixed emotions and I think that perhaps all this does is put a rubber stamp on what is already being done but I guess I see this as a poor time to go in this direction because of the changing times. I think next year, for instance, we may have an awfully lot to look over that we have changed this year or appropriated and I know what Senator Warner is saying and they are going to do that anyhow so I guess I don't see any real need for this legislation. The fluid state of the federal funds right now alone makes me think that we certainly are going to have to watch very closely. We are going to have to determine what of the programs that the federal government is cutting back on that the state wants to fund and of course we are going to have to determine, I think, that to a degree, is going to determine how much the counties and cities are going to have to fund for programs if they