

SENATOR DeCAMP: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, every once in awhile we stand up and we say things for the record, especially if we want to get them on the record, and that is what I am doing on this issue and it follows up from the Special Session. I am going to vote against the amendment and my reasons I think are totally separate and different from those spoken so far. Remember once the Legislature votes on this, if they vote and say sixteen percent, the ball game is over, and I hate to use the word "ball game" but that is what it has come to be as it has every year since we have been here, as it has every year in every other state. Once we say an increase is necessary, then it is the Legislature that has voted for a tax increase and the numbers become kind of meaningless, whether it is sixteen, eighteen, twenty. So my reason is this is not the point at which or the time where you can say a tax increase is or is not necessary until you get what a lot of the expenditures are going to be, reason number one. Reason number two is more important to me personally. I am totally satisfied in my own little mind that sixteen percent is not going to cut it either and sixteen percent is merely the device to say the Legislature says we need more money. Now the only reason I can offer that I think the sixteen percent is incorrect and not going to be enough, if you are going to meet the things that we are all talking about, the reasons, every year when I disagreed for the past six or eight years on how much was going to come in or how much was going to be there, I have been right. I am not bragging but it is a simple fact of life. When the Appropriation or the Revenue Department said we were going to have this much money, I said, "No, you are going to have a hundred million more", and indeed they did and we had the famous Christmas bonus. Then when they said, "Well, golly, we are going to have all this money", I said, "No, you are going to be about forty million short and have a Special Session because you wouldn't cut about two and a half percent before", and we did. Well I am saying absolutely that sixteen percent will not be enough. You are going to be wrong and all you have done with the sixteen percent when you vote for it is say the Legislature says we are going to have a tax increase. I am willing at the proper time to do that for the needs but let's do it up front, and if it is seventeen, if it is eighteen, if it is another quarter percent on sales tax, let's be up front about it, let's do it straight. Until that time, until we have what we are going to spend, until we have a little more information on the economy, and I think within another twelve hours you are going to have a lot more information, by the time you get the evening news today, until you get that, I don't think we ought to take this vote that casts us in a particular position. Those are my reasons for