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retardation aid, adult services in the Department of Corrections, direct care costs at the school for the deaf and the school for the visually handicapped and the salaries of enforcement officers of the State Patrol. For the remaining general fund programs I am recommending a 3.5 percent reduction across the board. This proposal will not require a further delay in the January 1, 5 percent pay increase for state employees. Since the announcement of this special session just three weeks ago, much of the discussion has revolved around the question of reducing the aid portion of the budget. Cries have been loud all over the place that we cannot reduce aid because that would certainly lead to an increase in property taxes. To that I just do not agree. Local governments are as capable of cutting spending as state government is and some have reserves and some, if you will check, haven't fully budgeted the state aid. I am very confident they will have the support of their constituents in reducing spending. In the matter of spending, the Constitution of the state of course makes it abundantly clear that the Legislature shall have the final authority. You, in your collected wisdom must evaluate my proposal and others that I am sure will come before you. This will probably be my last appearance before you to present a message to the Legislature. In closing let me take this opportunity once again to thank each and every one of you for your service to the people of Nebraska. Without a question of a doubt you've got an exciting but very, very demanding public office. I stood in a legislator's shoes for a number of years and I understand your pressures, concerns and problems probably a little better than quite a few people. Now like me, some of you will not be back next year. I would quickly like to recognize those senators at this time: Senator Larry Stoney, Senator Gerald Koch, Senator Walt Duda, Senator Don Dworak, Senator George "Bill" Burrows, Senator Shari Apking, Senator Maurice Kremer, Senator Ron Cope, Senator Myron Rumery. Bless you all especially and of course there is another missing legislative giant who will not be with us, thirty years of beautiful service, but Dick Marvel from Hastings will not be attending this session. Also I would like to take a very brief opportunity to thank my department heads and staff, many of whom are in the Chamber today, the gallery, for their hard work and loyal service to and for me and the State of Nebraska. The many sacrifices they have made are quite frequently little noticed but very, very much appreciated. Well my budget proposals are now before you. Again, I strongly recommend their adoption. I indicated before, as you well, well, know, the final decision of course is for you to make. I am going to end my administration as I began it, with a pledge to cooperate with you to act in the best interest of all Nebraskans. You are leaders, exceptionally good Nebraskans. It is well known that a handful here have publicly and with loyal opposition and other opposition tactics, of course, first, last and always in my mind, publicly disagreed pretty much with me on most matters. To them in leaving you may I leave this: Once a friend said to Voltaire, "It is good of you to say such pleasant things of him when he says such spiteful ones of you." "Perhaps," responded Voltaire, "we are both mistaken." Thank you, nice to have been with you this morning.

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