

it should go. Well, it seems like, I mean, I think we need to debate this. If you remember last year, this bill passed on a 25 to 23 vote. The Governor vetoed it. I should think we want to take a good, hard look before we advance this bill further. And I hope that all of you out there that...I know some of you didn't but those of you who did, you talked about controlling increase in government spending, hold those promises to heart and vote to kill this bill.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator McFarland, you may respond so that you do get to respond.

SENATOR MCFARLAND: Thank you, Mr. President. I would be delighted to respond. I will try to respond and keep a straight face. I wonder about the priority of this bill with the executive office. If it was a priority, why has nothing occurred between April of last year and January 18th of this year when this bill came up for hearing in the Government Committee? Now, my understanding is that the memorandum was supposedly a coincidence that it came out on that same day. I guess I can accept that. It may have been a coincidence that it happened to be on the same day as the committee hearing. However, I don't think that that fact counters the obvious result that there has not been any action of any substance taken between April and January of...April of last year and January of this year. Almost nine months have gone by and I can tell you I have hosted a number of foreign visitors to our state between that time and nothing, to my knowledge, has been coordinated through the executive offices. And it's very interesting, I wish that everyone could have been at the committee hearing to hear the testimony of Secretary of State Beermann and State Treasurer Marsh and Mr. Ottoson. They gave three varied perspectives on the thing. They are people that have been involved with this situation for 10, 15, 20 years. They have hosted these guests. They are aware of the problems and the lack of courtesy we provide under the current system. And you will notice that the people that did hear this testimony for the committee...before the committee, the Government Affairs Committee, all voted unanimously to advance this bill to the floor. There was not one dissenting vote. There was not one person who did not vote on this matter. All eight people in the Government Committee voted to advance. They all heard the testimony. There were no opponents to the bill. As a matter of fact, I just visited with Senator Korshoj and Senator Weihing. My under...Senator Weihing has expressed his strong support of