

this legislation. To show the sort of things that can be done under this legislation, I did pass out for you the medical center stories, an editorial from just the last few days. We saw there that after we approved the medical center project, that the medical center did cut its costs by finding money in this cash reserves and putting it into the financing of its program, of its project which will save the financing costs of the project \$7.9 million. That's not bad, saving \$7.9 million. And it's funny because if you look at it, you'll also, again, looking back over the years, found in 1986 the medical center wanted a geriatric facility. They wanted to spend \$11 million. They found that they weren't going to succeed in the CON review and they came back and cut that to a \$1 million project, \$10 million savings. We've got to get a handle on this problem, and frankly, it's no different than trying to get a handle on the budget which we've just gone through today and yesterday. Saying no is tough. It's one of the hardest things anybody can do. The Appropriations Committee tries to do it for us in this Legislature and we've seen that that has not been easy to do. Saying no to projects is just as difficult for health care, but just like out budget is limited in its resources, so is our resource base for health care. We cannot continue to spend everything we would like to spend on health care costs, just like we can't spend everything we'd like to spend of the budget. So somebody has got to say no and, unfortunately, we're going to open up too much, I think, under this bill, the ability to move forward without somebody having a review and a chance to say no. And any time you do say no, which the CON process does, somebody is not going to like it. There are many Bergan Mercy's out there that have been told no that come back and try and find another way to get their goals and it's just as we've gone through in the budget, you say no once and they try another approach and another day and another time until they finally get their goals and unfortunately, eventually, they seem to succeed. So saying no is something that is hard for this Legislature and this state but we've got to learn to say no or we'll never get a handle on the health care cost issue. We'll never be able to bring to grips the sort of tripling of costs that we've seen just in one area. We're also seeing in Medicaid and in other programs a total cost increase of over \$100 million over the next two years. As we've fought and struggled for \$98 million in property tax relief, if somehow, some way we could match it, we'd wipe out the health care cost increases we're facing, we'd be able to do two years of property tax relief, not just one. We'd be able to do a lot of the other things we're talking