

saved the state many, many dollars. I notice there is a proposal to create an ombudsman for the Department of Environmental Control and it was suggested that it could be handled through this office but the department insisted that they have their own ombudsman. I do not know what is the disposition of that proposal at this time but I do think that the indication that an ombudsman would be effective for the Department of Environmental Control indicates the value of continuing the ombudsman's office. I do, however, believe that, as Senator Dierks has indicated, that the ombudsman's office could perhaps take a small cut, as have some of the other offices, therefore, I have offered an amendment which changes the 100 percent to 10. And I would hope that you would adopt that amendment.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Schmit. I will now recognize senators wishing to speak to the Schmit amendment. Senator Elmer. Senator Warner.

SENATOR ELMER: Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Senator Elmer.

SENATOR ELMER: Thank you, Madam President, members, Senator Dierks, I think that you've struck a chord that would bring a great cry of relief from a great many of our constituents out there. Whenever we campaign we talk about how we should streamline government, how we should cut down costs, and here we have an opportunity to seriously discuss it on the floor, a rare opportunity, I must say, because usually it's...the only way we get to discuss it is to try to prevent increases in budgets and not decreases in budgets. And, Senator Schmit, I tend to agree with your amendment about the ombudsman. When I have had constituents that have had a great deal of problems with people dispensing social services who, in their own little private domain, set up...set up their own kingdoms, and feel like that they have within their power the lives and fortunes of all of those poor people out there that require the social services and render an iron hand in the dispensation of the state funds unjustly, the ombudsman has stood up and helped those individuals to a large extent. They do need some help against the bureaucracies. Looking at some of the further cuts that Senator Dierks has proposed, one that's right close to our heart, our legislative services or staff, I think that 50 percent could be achieved. When we walk through here during