

them, did not like the money going in to a weatherization program, and they fought again when we reauthorized the program in 1985, and now they are fighting again to try and end the program and divert the money back into this effort, and I understand that. The severance tax, as Senator Withem has said, did always go into the school and it always did stay into the schools, even though this one into the weatherization of schools, and in the end we found the return on our investment was far greater from doing this than the alternative that we had done before, which had not provided a real cost benefit that weatherization clearly does and did. One of the things I'd like to let you know, well, first off, I want to mention, I've got my award that I got with DeCamp and Fowler, and, you know, I cherish it. This is my retirement, this Golden Nugget award I got from Honeywell, and I am worried a bit about having to mail it back in if this bill is repealed, so I'd ask you to be very cautious about adopting the Withem and Robinson amendment. You know, you just don't want to follow arrogant liberals any day of the week, you know, and, of course, we know better than that, but, in any event, we did pass the bill in '81. We did get recognized nationally for the effort. It did end up being a very cost-benefit positive program, and in the end, I am very proud of what we did, but I also think Senator Withem is right in saying, you know, is this being administered the way it should? Is it performing the way it should? And those questions are all legitimate, but what I would counter with is energy conservation, which was a big concern in 1981, which was a big concern in 1985, well, obviously, is not at the top of the agenda in 1995. We seem to have forgotten some of the concerns we had not that many years ago about energy resources, about shortages, about cost. They are all present. I think we are still paying a high amount in terms of different energy cost, but we don't seem to have the level of concern about what to do about it. We seem to have some plentiful supplies, and we have some stability in the prices, and so we don't really see this as a high priority. So I understand why it looks attractive to move in this direction, but the consequence I think is still there, that weatherization is still a positive return on investment; you still have a situation where our state has not put monies, state monies into the Energy Office, where other states have. We've got federal dollars and we have had the weatherization program, and it is true, there is a lot of staff that are partially funded from weatherization. And the reason is that we haven't as a state, as a Legislature, been willing to put in state dollars and recognize energy as a key issue. So