

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Senator Withem. Senator Bernard-Stevens, your light is next.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Senator Hall, members of the Legislature. First of all, I will not be supporting the Warner amendment, though if the bracket motion would go I suspect...it's a rock and a hard place, Senator Warner, because I don't want to do it, but I know that if we do the bracket motion that's exactly what we need to do. So I'm going to speak against the bracket motion at this particular point. Senator Withem said he would speak in a soft voice and harsh words, so I'll probably do the opposite, be irresponsible and be in a harsh voice and not do as well, but I'll try to keep it down. You look at those that voted against or simply didn't care to vote on the bracket motion for \$6 million of new spending on a new program. And then you look at those that sign a resolution that say, by golly, we got to cut, let's send the Appropriations Committee back. And you look at those and you just go right down the list. Senator Abboud voted no on the bracket motion, but he wants to send it back to committee, let them make the cuts. Senator Bohlke voted no; Senator Cudaback voting no on the bracket motion. Senator Dierks voting no. Senator Janssen just didn't vote. Senator McKenzie didn't vote. Senator Robinson voted no. Senator Vrtiska voted no. And then they say we need to cut, we need to send the Appropriations Committee back and cut. The bottom line is the responsibility to cut is when the Appropriations Committee's budget comes on the floor and we have the opportunity to offer amendments to say no. And when other bills are before us we have the opportunity to say no. And this body has lacked the courage to say no. And I would like to go back, I wish I had time last night to go back and research all of the rhetoric that I'm sure each person that is supporting this bracket motion, I'd like to know the rhetoric that they used in their campaigns. I'll bet you, I'll bet you odds the rhetoric was the Legislature is spending too much, we have got to get tough, we've got to make those tough decisions. And you know what, when we have a chance to make the tough decisions we whimper away. We said, no, we don't want to bracket \$6 million of new spending, we don't want to do that. We want to take kind of the easy way out. We'll go send the Appropriations Committee back and make them made the decisions, and then we'll have put them in a position of coming to us with an amendment that will take things out of the budget of which we all know the money is there in the budget, because otherwise it wouldn't be 3.49 percent above the 3 percent reserve. That's a