

look at this budget? He says the Appropriations Committee. Well, why in the world would we be any better the second time around. I think we've been successful. I think we've put together a good budget. I think we've had good leadership. The other reason why, although I will not vote when it comes up, I think this isn't the right direction to go. As Senator Robinson indicates, we need to do what we did the other day relative to that darn lid bill, where we are forcing these local governments to take a 4 percent cut, by golly. That isn't what we did. We reduced their limit 1 percent. They can still grow the CPI, or 4 percent. We all know that local government spending has increased more than that because of the exceptions and because except for school districts that limit only applies to the property tax revenue, doesn't apply to any other revenue sources that they have available to them. They are accountable to their local constituents. Let's deal with facts here. I hope everybody listened to Chairman Wehrbein, and Senator Warner. I hope they look at page 17, and look at the five-year projected growth, including this two-year budget for the operations, at 3.4 percent. Do I like everything in this budget? Of course not. It is not my budget. It is our committee's budget. It is now the Legislature's budget. The majority controls. I bet you we took over a thousand votes on this document, majority controls. Majority controls on any amendment that is filed to amend this budget. It is a recommendation from our committee. It is not the law yet. Do we take offense to this? I hope, certainly, my tone, Senator Chambers, doesn't demonstrate that. I think it is appropriate that people would try to amend the budget. We are willing to stand up and defend that, but I want to conclude with one last thing. The budget is in balance, and it is in balance without raising taxes. And if you send it back and cuts are made, that doesn't mean your taxes are going down because there is no revenue bill up there to do that.

SENATOR HALL: One minute.

SENATOR MAURSTAD: So let's understand what this bracket motion would do. Let's understand what this process is. I believe in the process. I think we are going to end up with a good product. I think we are going to end up with a product we can defend to the citizens of this state. I think we'll end up with a product that we can stand the scrutiny of the Governor's veto pen. Fine. That is his part of the process. We can bring it back, we can take a look at what he has done. But if you believe in the process, you have trust and confidence in our