

in debt? The answer is no. In fact, when you look at the budget that was presented to us, the Appropriations Committee put I think twenty thousand...twenty million dollars in the Cash Reserve Fund as an actual protection on Maximus or what other entities, what other spending things may be coming down, and you still look at the revenue at the end of the year, fiscal year, and there is \$17 million that they did not spend, which gives us 3.48 percent on our 3 percent reserve. And then even going to the outlying year, the following biennium, and you say what...what may be happening, could sales be down because of the crop situation, may revenue be down, will that affect the budget? Yes, but they still have the \$20 million in the Cash Reserve added to, and they still have a \$9.9 million surplus that they didn't spend. There is about, again, \$17 million that they could have spent that they didn't. Now this body made a decision earlier, and we will find out if they want to keep that decision when we get on the ethanol bill on Final Reading. If we had \$17 million to spend over the next two years, the ethanol bill will take 16 of that. And what it, basically, means is that the appropriations budget is not the issue here. What the issue is is those bills that we have that are added to the budget, and so I wanted to kind of clarify for at least Nebraskans who might be watching, if they get the impression that the budget that we have presented to us from the Appropriations Committee was overspent and was overdrawn, I want to, or at least for the record, say not true, not true. They were fiscally conservative. In fact, at one point, they had \$172 million of cuts that they made. They were very efficient in going through and finding inefficiencies. I think what Chairman Wehrbein has brought to us has been a very fiscally sound and responsible budget, and I appreciate his leadership on the Appropriations Committee. The question simply remains is what are we going to do in the bills that we would like to pass that have spending? The only options we have is to cut from the budget to make room, or say no, and I would recommend that if people want to reduce on the mainline budget, it is not because the Appropriations Committee spent too much, it is because they want to make room for something else that they want to spend. The Governor complains the Legislature is spending too much, but it is the Governor's crime package, and the Governor's CETA fund that is spending another 14 or so million dollars. Our decision needs to be where do we find room for it, or do we just say, no, we can't afford it. We should get on with that. We should vote the bracket motions down. We should get on to the discussion of the budget. I would hope that if we work through the noon hour