

to move forward with a bill and a budget that does the salary issue, that does the state aid issues to all of the various entities across Nebraska; \$1,080,000,000, sixty percent of our budget. So I just ask you to think about that as you vote on this bill but it is a tough love type of a thing, if I may use that term, because it is things we have to do; unless more are willing to take those cuts somewhere, 25, then we need to move forward with this bill in a responsible manner. I support the suspension.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator. Senator Witek.

SENATOR WITEK: Madam Chairman, and members of the body, I just wanted to rise in opposition to this motion to suspend the rules. I understand that we've been on the budget for 14 hours, but we haven't cut any of the budget, and since the only successful amendment was to increase the budget, and I have an amendment up. It is only \$40,000, I understand that, but it is to take money from the Schools Accountability Commission, since they are disbanding, and they will be receiving lots of money from the federal government. And I guess my feeling on the budget is when we first came in and last year the paper was asking what's the number one issue here this year, and outside of crime, certainly in Omaha for sure, it was taxes, and in particular property taxes. And I understand that there is not too many things we can do at this level to affect property taxes but we can affect other taxes, and we can affect spending, and cutting spending, and this budget doesn't do much of that in spite of what the Appropriations Committee has made comments on. It's had quite an increase, 370 some thousand...million dollars, million dollars in the next two years. We are almost hitting \$2 billion a year to run the State of Nebraska, to run the government in the State of Nebraska, just the state government in the State of Nebraska. That is an incredible amount of money for one and a half million people to support, and that's the population. That's not even the working population of this state. I guess part of my reasons for becoming a state senator was to try to...to get you to understand that the families in the State of Nebraska can't afford the government anymore. We just can't. We can't cut back on our budgets any more. We can't stop doing away with things. We cut down on the times we visit the dentist. We cut down on between our own haircuts, cut down, on whatever it takes we cut down every time we can't afford it. We make those adjustments and make those sacrifices. Even though we might want something and we might want the best