

SENATOR WILL: Thank you, Senator Wickersham. Senator Withem.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Yes, members of the body, I...I believe I stand at this time to join with the arguments that I've heard from Senator Wickersham and the argument I heard from Senator Lindsay awhile ago that I have...I don't have the concerns about appropriating state funds for the purpose of solving a problem. I don't have a problem with doing that. I am interested in the discussion about 309 money versus the technology money. I am interested in that debate, but, at this point, I am comfortable still I think coming down on the side of spending this on technology. Where I join with Senator Wickersham and Senator Lindsay, and I believe in opposition to the amendment that Senator Wehrbein is offering, I understand why Senator Wehrbein is offering it. I think what Senator Wehrbein wants to do is to make sure that this is not viewed by the agencies responsible for this as a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow that they can spend a few dollars out of it to fix the problem and then go willy-nilly forth and spend the rest of it on wild new gadgets of one kind or another. I understand that that's the thrust. I am fearful, though, that while there is I think from what limited knowledge I have, and I know enough about computers literally to be dangerous in this case, because I don't understand to the degree of expertise that you need in order to get in and solve a problem, but I think I have kind of a picture of what's going on in the computer world. And there is a debate that has gone on for a number of years regarding mainframe computers, which are the traditional methodology of storing information and processing data, and then when the PCs came out, everybody kind of rushed over to the other side and the solution was networking PCs together. And I think what is happening now is, and again I don't understand this well enough to articulate it all that well, but what I understand is that there is kind of a middle ground approach, where we are not going back to the old mainframe, because it is rather archaic, and I think the descriptions we've heard from Senator Hillman and Senator Wehrbein were excellent descriptions of an archaic system, it we'll go into something, I believe the term is client server systems, where they are not the huge mainframes, but they are somewhat larger than the PCs and then they are networked together. As a matter of fact, to a large extent, I think that the Internet, itself, is certainly not a mainframe system but is a series of computers, some of which are mainframe, some of which reside on little PCs in people's homes, some of which are