

protect ourselves a little bit more from it being spent but also so that we can have money in our Cash Reserve Fund so that people who are economic develop...developers can look at our Cash Reserve Fund and say that we have stability in our financial decision-making? And we are talking about how the fiscal health of our state is viewed. And, you know, it's very real money and we were very appropriately skeptical about it and we handled it very appropriately, and now we're just trying to decide whether it would be more responsible to make the decision this year or next year as to the amount that goes into the Cash Reserve Fund. Thank you.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Maurstad.

SENATOR MAURSTAD: Thank you, Mr. President. I just want to make three points. I'm going to try to make them as simply and clearly as I can and maybe we can get some people to switch back again from where they were originally at before, see how many times we can get that done on...on one particular amendment. First of all, these...this reserve, this transfer is not contingent upon Maximus. This is the same as any other anticipated revenues. I mean, it would be the same as if we had a shortfall in sales tax revenue or income tax revenue, we'd have to treat it in exactly the same way. This doesn't change how much we have to spend. The bottom line at the end of the two-year budget period remains exactly the same. This is merely talking about putting money into the Cash Reserve so that it is, in essence, off the table to a certain extent. It does, in fact, maybe reduce the flexibility that we might have, but the fact is, we are indicating that these are funds that we don't...that we do not wish to spend at this time and we want to indicate that so that it's in our Cash Reserve Fund to clearly signal that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Thank you. Senator Crosby. Do I see five hands? I do. The question is, shall debate now cease? All of those in favor vote aye, opposed vote nay. We are voting on whether to call the question. Record, Mr. Clerk.

ASSISTANT CLERK: 21 ayes, 4 nays to cease debate.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Debate is not ceased. Senator Pedersen. Senator Brown, you're recognized to close.