

least the vote was pretty clearly a commitment or an indication on the part of the Legislature, to build a prison next year. The one thing that we haven't done, as I think Senator Maurstad has said repeatedly, is we haven't identified a funding source. We said we're going to spend \$60 million next year to start building a prison, but we haven't said where that money is going to come from. And it's a difficult...it's a difficult vote to make to say I want to increase the sales tax to build a new prison. We never want to vote to increase tax, but we do...we do seem to always vote for the policy that's going to increase the number of people going into the prisons and is going to ultimately result in us having to spend that money. Well, the activities we've taken place in, over the past several years, I think are at a point where we got to pay the piper. And unless we can identify cuts, I think, which we've been unable to do so far, we have to identify a new funding source. To put that off, and I think Senator Beutler kind of touched on this a little bit earlier this afternoon when he talked about, with his sales tax amendment, to start funding some of the increased state aid. Putting it off till next year, I don't know that that's a responsible thing to do when we know we're facing an enormous cost, when we know the Appropriations Committee is going to have to work their tails off trying to figure out where \$60 million is going to come from, plus the \$10 million each year to operate it. We are...I'm not sure if we're being responsible in not stepping up and funding that now. It is, in effect, an unfunded mandate to ourselves to commit ourselves to the planning dollars, to say we are going to build that prison, and we sure as heck hope there's a whole lot of dollars out there next year to build it. What the Lindsay-Maurstad amendment would do is to identify that source and say if we're going to commit to building it, if that's going to be the policy of the state, we better figure out where that money is coming from. This would, this amendment would identify that, identify that by increasing the sales tax by half a percent for a year. With that, I would urge the adoption of the amendment.

SPEAKER WITHEM PRESIDING

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Warner.

SENATOR WARNER: Mr. President, I appreciate the seriousness of the issue that the amendment offers, but I would like to inquire of the Chair as to the germaneness of a capital construction for