

PRESIDENT ROBAK: One minute.

SENATOR MAURSTAD: The Department of Public Institutions will be able to provide a 2 percent salary adjustment and reimbursement. What is that? That doesn't relate to anything. That has nothing to do with the equity methodology that's occurred in the past. I mean we're taking a completely different course here. I don't understand the logic behind that, reducing it only partially, doing a 2 percent thing. This isn't an option. In this particular case, it's not something that we can pit against something else. This was a commitment the Legislature made. It's one we need to fulfill, and I certainly hope the members will support the Crosby override this morning.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Maurstad. Senator Engel.

SENATOR ENGEL: Madam Chairman, members of the body, I, too, support Senator Crosby's override. It's a very difficult decision with the budget situation as it is. However, in our area in northeast Nebraska, Region IV, they have done a great job of providing services, but there is so much competition up there to get people on the front line to be able to even keep them employed because of our rate equity differential. They're competing with Taco John's and McDonald's, much less the Gateways and MCIs in that area. And at \$5.85, those people out there actually providing the services, the one on the front line, they cannot keep those people. And no matter how much we put in there from this end, if those people out there, if you can't keep those working and capable, able people, then everything we're doing here as far as I'm concerned is for naught. I'm also a realist. I realize that we're having a budget crunch, and I'm asking for some, at this point, asking for some current revenue projections for the month of April. If it continues I realize for the last quarter as it did...the next quarter as it did for the last quarter, that we are going to be in dire straits and so we have to look at that also. But I do earnestly plead that we support her override. Thank you.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator. Senator Crosby.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Madam President and members, and I do appreciate the people who have spoken in support of this motion. One of the things I'd like to point out is that to get 75 percent we still need on this provider's rate equity sheet