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Senator. (AM0429 is found on page 659 of the Legislative Journal.)

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the body. This simply makes the 3 percent the average for the two years, 3 percent average over the two years, 3 percent average each year over the two years, and it's a committee amendment so that it's...still have of a total of a 3 percent increase. It's a average of 3 and it's...it's, I don't know, I guess you wouldn't call it a technical amendment, but it's...clarifies that it's 3 percent average over the two years, each year, so that if you wanted, say, 2.5 one year, 3.5 the second, it averages 3. That's the intent of this, so that it's clear that over the two-year period.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator. We have a number of lights on. For discussion on the committee amendments, Senator Don Pederson.

SENATOR D. PEDERSON: Mr. President, members of the body, I thought at this point it might be a good idea to maybe better inform the entire body, particularly the new members of the body and those who have not had the pleasure, at times, of serving on the Appropriations Committee. When I first went on the Appropriations Committee two years ago, the thing that was said was, well, it's been...it's been easier to be on the Appropriations Committee before because you would just simply say, we don't have any money, and that was the decision, but when you do have additional funds available then the job becomes much more difficult because you can't just arbitrarily say we don't have the money. It's just that we don't choose to spend the money in this fashion. So I'd like to share with you just a bit of how the Appropriations Committee functions. As you know, we are charged with the establishment of the mainline budget for the state. There are approximately 90 agencies within the state government that bring their budgets to us. This budget is then analyzed by the Governor's Fiscal Office and also by the legislator's Fiscal Office. It is in this analysis by the Governor's Office, together with bills that he may offer on his behalf, that makeup his budget. Now the nine members of the Appropriations Committee then go into probably what you think is a cave five days a week and evaluate all of these matters. And