

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

March 2, 1999

LR 3

the base. And so then we don't have the flexibility to address new things as they come up that we might need to respond to, because we, as Senator Wehrbein said, we are always dealing with the ongoing impact of previous decisions. So we are taking about some very serious choices here. I mean if you adopt the resolution as proposed, we're talking about needing to cut \$7.5 million out of the budget that we've advanced, and there...and we have had hearings already where we have had agencies come in and say, even though we have funded them at a level that we feel is reasonable, they absolutely cannot function without X number of new dollars. As I said before, the average request from boards and commissions that came before us, the average increase request was about 25 percent increase. Now boards and commissions represent a fairly small percentage of our budget. But when you're talking about that kind of...

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: One minute.

SENATOR BROWN: ...an increase year, after year, after year, and so the 15 million that would be available under the Schimek amendment will grow exponentially as it works through evolution. There's a chart that Senator Kristensen passed out that shows that under 1 percent less than the Nebraska personal income, that eventually we could, within five bienniums we could get down underneath the lowest point in taxation. But it takes five bienniums, five bienniums of discipline, five bienniums of making hard choices and I...so we have to think about that when we look at the Schimek amendment because we are...we're just...

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Time.

SENATOR BROWN: ...letting ourselves off the hook for this year, this biennium. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Brown. Discussion on the Schimek amendment to the committee amendments, Senator Engel.

SENATOR ENGEL: Mr. President, members of the body, I've...this is my sixth year serving on the Appropriations Committee, and I do have to agree with Senator Pederson, that sometimes we do feel like we're in a cave. But we do work hard and we do try to