

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

March 10, 1999 LB 149

we've made tough, tough calls. And the response back to me was, yeah, but half of your budget you don't have any control over. I didn't have a very good answer for that because there isn't a very good answer to that. And I'm going to support the Wickersham amendment. Obviously, I would have liked to have seen it be a supermajority of the board but, quite frankly, when they get to those times, whether they get a supermajority or a half majority, it...it isn't going to make a lot of difference. They'll be able to get those votes. And so you are faced with a Hobson's choice.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: One minute.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: This is not raising property tax. Yes, they have the option, if we come short, they have another tax base to go to. Are you percentagewise talking about a lot? No, because the percentage that is going to impact all of the property areas is significantly lower than the impact you'll have on the remaining state budget. You're the stewards of the state budget. That's got to be your first concern, and I just think that we'll never make this work if you're going to wait till we have a serious crisis. We're never going to change the law and make the cuts in the same year. It will be way too difficult. It will never happen and you're going to wish that we had some mechanism, some out, and, quite frankly, the Wickersham amendment is complimentary to this. It makes it work and I'd hope at this point in time we'd vote for that, and then move on to the main amendment. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Kristensen. Senator Bromm, on the Wickersham amendment.

SENATOR BROMM: (Microphone not activated immediately) ...Senator...Senator Wickersham's amendment really focuses on what the argument and decision and discussion is all about on this bill. I've had the opportunity to be here while the Legislature was trying to develop the plans to bring some reduction in property taxes, and that was...that was a tough battle. The Legislature took a lot of heat from cities and counties and townships, fire districts, on down the line, schools. We took a lot of heat but, under Senator Warner's guidance, we chose to develop a system of property tax