

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

March 10, 1999 LB 149

received from one of my constituents who said, I am a family farmer, overwhelmed by expenses which exceed income, and particularly my property taxes are exceeding my income, and I'm dipping into savings to pay for them. Since 1993, the farm dynamic has been changing. In '93, one of the many social security fixes hit particularly hard on individual taxpayers. Also property taxes began to increase while income began to decrease. And I think that's what we've been trying to do in the Legislature is to look at some relief for our property taxpayers. I believe that K through 12 is one of our first responsibilities. I know that we have the burden and the responsibility to look at funding for higher education but I still believe that K through 12 is our primary responsibility. It is a necessity, and I just wanted to ask Senator Wehrbein, as Chairman of the Appropriations, a question.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Senator Wehrbein, would you yield.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Yes.

SENATOR STUHR: Senator Wehrbein, is it possible, because I'm not into the appropriations bit, but is it possible to increase the Cash Reserve Fund that would allow for a cushion, so that we would still have the stability and predictability that we're looking for when we certify state aid, but would still have some funding available in that area?

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Yes, it is, with 25 votes we can, yes.

SENATOR STUHR: So, actually, we really wouldn't need the Kristensen amendment,...

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Ah...

SENATOR STUHR: ...if we had built in some...

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Well, it would be a question of how far \$100 million would go over, let's say, two years, if we really did turn into a downturn and/or the temptation is always there to spend it. I can give you a more accurate answer come May 25th.