

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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LB 880

resources to do that. And in that respect, I think it's important to note that by our projections no NRD would actually be unable to provide necessary services if we made the change that's proposed in this amendment. Would they, could they, will they raise their property taxes? I don't know. But if you take \$1.6 million away from counties and they do not have state dollars to fund necessary services, will it be any easier for a county board to raise taxes? And, in fact, won't they be required to raise taxes in a way that looks more significant to their patrons because they have a much smaller revenue base, typically, than the NRDs, which may cover several counties? May cover several counties, not just one. So if you're going to make up the same dollars out of a tax base, you're going to have a larger increase at the county level than you would have had at the NRD level in terms of the levy. It is unfortunate, I think, that we have the argument that somehow this is going to kill the NRDs and it is going to impinge essential services. That is simply not the case, but the case is quite the converse, that if we do not provide adequate state dollars to the counties, that they will be unable to fund some local services. We cut \$9 million out of their resources last year. We cut nothing out of NRDs and, in fact, we allowed NRD spending to grow at 14 percent when the counties expenditure grew at a much more modest level. We have asked NRDs to do nothing to become more efficient and effective during the entire process that we have engaged in with other governmental subdivisions. We have asked them to do nothing. And even today if we adopt this amendment, we will still ask them to do nothing except allow us to use our state dollars for resources for our political subdivisions that we have asked a great deal of, and that may not have the resources to provide services to its particular constituents if we don't provide adequate state dollars for them.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Wickersham. The question is the adoption of Amendment 1609 to LB 880. Those in favor vote aye, those opposed nay. Please record.

CLERK: 10 ayes, 28 nays, Mr. President, on the amendment.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: The amendment is not agreed to. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Mr. President, the...I am sorry, next amendment, Senator