

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

May 19, 1999

LB 637A, 637

It's one thing to say they have to do it on the money that they have, and another thing to get that job done, and this is probably not an atypical issue with computerization and one of the extreme frustrations that we have in the Appropriations Committee. But to simply say they have to get it done on what they have isn't going to work, because if there's no money there it won't get done and we're going to be left holding the sack again on a very important issue. And I...I don't know all the ins and outs of this and...of why the additional money is needed to catch it up to speed, but I will say if we take this money we're simply going to have a flop there, incomplete. We're not going to have the records that we need to do to follow through with what the feds are asking with the federal money. It simply does no good to take this money and then say get it done or else, because "or else" means nothing. And so I'm going to oppose this particular amendment. I, too, would like to save the money, but if we're going to move forward on LB 637 and do the things we need, we're going to have to keep moving forward with our computerization and whatever this involves. And I think that we cannot justify doing that at this point. I think we need to keep moving forward and I think we need to put the money in. I admit, I cannot give you in great detail what money this...this is going for or why it isn't done. It's not uncommon through the nineties here that either things have been underestimated, or we haven't had the adequate personnel to work on this, or whatever. I don't want to take it lightly, but I do know that taking the money is just going to make the...make matters worse, and I do not support this amendment.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Senator Baker.

SENATOR BAKER: Thank you, Mr. President. I...I realize this may be a bit drastic, but I really don't think it's unreasonable. We're taking 2 million dollars of General Fund appropriation the first year, 1.2 million the second, but that leaves 4.77 million to get this thing up and running the first year, 3.01 million the second year. It's not like we're taking all their money by any means. That's the way I read it anyway. They have...this is in the third paragraph of the fiscal note. You can follow along if you want, but the upgrading of the state computer system, which I'm assuming here, I'm a little bit like Senator Wehrbein, but I'm assuming that's the CHARTS program.