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LB 881

SENATOR COORDSEN: Senator Wehrbein, please.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Question.

SENATOR COORDSEN: No need for that, there are no further lights on. Senator Beutler, did you wish to say anything in closing on your amendment?

SENATOR BEUTLER: I do, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to go through, just quickly, the reasons why I wish you would support the amendment. First of all, it's not needed, the Appropriations Committee has put the entire amount of money needed for that third phase reduction from \$1.10 to \$1.00 in the budget. Even if that wasn't enough, there's \$18 million of excess reserve money sitting there in the 3 percent...above the 3 percent minimum budget. Even if that's not enough, there's another \$20 million in Section 5 funds that will be returned probably from the overappropriation of the next two years of the state aid formula. So the commitment to make that \$1.10 to a \$1 drop is in the law now. It's mandatory. It's not a matter of our thinking about it unless we change that law. Secondly, you're avoiding bad policy by adopting this amendment, and that bad policy is switching money out of the reserve fund in advance of any known need to do that; in advance of any known need to do that, and in the face of a probable total lack of need to do that. You're avoiding the bad policy of keeping a reserve fund that's too low in the face particularly of the low-level waste litigation, the Republican River litigation, a couple of very big, big items. And, lastly, and I didn't mention this before, you're avoiding bad policy by taking the pressure off A bills in the 2001 session. If you transfer this money in the year 2001 and it's not needed, you're going to be sitting there with \$35 million of extra money in the year 2001, and all that's going to do is encourage us to spend more money than we might otherwise be likely to do. We can always put the money back into the reserve fund. I would hope that we would do that, but who knows? Why take it out of the reserve fund if you don't know that it's needed? So, with that, I'd ask your support for the amendment.

SENATOR COORDSEN: Thank you. You've heard the closing. The