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March 13, 2000 LB 1214, 1217

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Right.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Okay. The only thing I'm making clear, this may not be the last of our dealing with this bill even if we adopt the current amendment and move it forward.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: That's always possible, yes.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Thank you. I'm starting to get my...my sea legs under me now and understand this esoteric area of building a budget, but I still at this point don't want to get into specific figures and programs because we can do that in LB 1217 and I intend to be an active participant over there. Why would I offer an amendment that would reduce what originally was a \$35 million amount to go into that slush fund, that property tax relief fund, which under the amendment by the committee would be reduced to \$25...\$25 million and under my amendment would be reduced an additional \$20 million down to \$5 million? Because if it's so important for taxpayers to see anything on their property tax statement showing some kind of refund then they would be as happy with a nickel as with \$40, because they have no idea of what is going to come back or on what basis a determination is made to give them anything back. I would rather keep this amount of money and do something with it. That may or may not happen, but when we consider the budget bills, that is a place where we're going to see the tying in and relating of a lot of issues, because when money is appropriated policies are set. That's why whoever was head of the Exchequer in England had a whole lot of power and did a lot of things that changed the course of history. There was a old guy named Lord North whom most people may not be aware of, who made some decisions that helped impel the colonies to an armed revolution. But, at any rate, whoever controls the purse strings actually does have the power to control all other things. Whether or not that power will be exercised is another question. I want to kind of goad and prod my colleagues into a full realization of what kind of power the Legislature has and, more important than that, the fact that we must begin to exercise it in such a way as to affect policy. How does the Governor affect policy? He says if you don't vote for this measure then I'll come out and support a bill of yours. If you don't support this measure and now that you have an opponent running against you, I'll try to