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SPEAKER BROMM: Thank you, Senator Jones. Senator Kruse.

SENATOR KRUSE: Mr. Speaker and members, I am so impressed by Senator Brashear over here, I'd like take him out of the chamber of commerce and put him in church. Preach it, brother. (Laugh) I will also oppose the amendment, and for the reasons that have already been indicated, so I'll not belabor them. But we're talking about removing earmarks on appropriations in the midst of a revenue bill. It's confusing, if not other things. I certainly do not resent the conversation. I welcome the general chain of thought that was introduced by Senator Chambers. It's time for us to look at every option. We need to do that. We need to get public's attention. Just by introducing this amendment we've gotten the public's attention. I must admit that, as a member of Appropriations, I have a little less enthusiasm for this process than some might have, because it's old hat. If you want to get somebody's attention, you cut their budget for the coming year. And we did that, time after time, dozens of times. Well, I wonder what would happen if we cut them? Well, let's find out. We cut, and we found out, and that's the way we tested a lot of those numbers. We did that day after day and night after night. It's a good process. But I don't think we're to that point here. One of the things that I learned in this year more than in previous years is what a cut is. A cut is not a cut unless it goes away. I looked over this list, and we have dealt in Appropriations with some of these items. There's only one, the very first item, that would actually go away. So you're not cutting. And there's been impassioned speeches about how we've got to cut. I agree. That's where we are. That's what we got to think about. But when it doesn't go away, we haven't gained anything. And especially the \$28 million doesn't go away. That's our own money. That's the biggest item in there. But the other items also have commitments, have obligations. It's quite appropriate to raise them, to look at them, to think about them. But to make that kind of a cut, even tentative cut at this time, is to me wasting our time and out of order in terms of our process of looking first at revenue and then examining the appropriation bill in its entirety. Thank you.