

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
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FLOOR DEBATE

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ask you? It seems to me that if we force it to 0 percent growth we're creating kind of a manufactured number of what it really costs to fund our schools. Am I missing the point here, Senator Raikes, or...

SENATOR RAIKES: Well, I'm not sure that you are, Senator Bourne. Certainly the intention here is that growth in spending is going to have to be restricted. Now there's a certain point I think at which you can restrict it so much that you simply...you're simply backing up legitimate requirements and you're going to have to all of a sudden break loose and fund them all. We're hoping that with this proposal we're not causing that drastic a reduction. Now I understand that when you say 2.5 percent to 0 that really sounds drastic, and certainly is significant. I'm not denying that at all. But I think the context to keep in mind is that if spending has increased in the neighborhood of 5.5 to 6 percent with a 2.5 percent lid, then probably we're going to be in the 3.5, 2...or 3 to 3.5 percent increase in spending with this reduction, which, again, is significant, but hopefully it's not drastic.

SENATOR BOURNE: And I appreciate your comments. I appreciate your work on this. And you and I have discussed this in the past and, again, I was trying to come up with an analogy on how to ask you this question, and I think the 309 fund is appropriate. My concern is, is that if we force it to 0 percent growth that we will get so far behind in terms of funding our education four years from now that we won't be able to make it up. And even if it's a 0 percent growth, it's not real because, inflation being what it is, the cost of other things going up as they are, you know, it might indicate four years from now that it costs X to fund education and in reality it's X plus four and we'll never be able to recover from that, and that's what I'm trying to suggest. And so, while I agree with the overall concept of LB 540, I am concerned with the 0 percent growth and I guess we can go from there.

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR BOURNE: I'll listen to the debate and I, again, I do