

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

April 29, 2003 LB 407

they're looking at salary and benefit freezes at the higher education level; Virginia, a tuition increase was allowed to offset most of a \$286 million General Fund reduction; and in Wisconsin, a \$250 million cut offset by a tuition increase of only \$150 million to make that up. On the employee side, you'll see that in Massachusetts they're talking about wage freezes, hiring freezes, health benefit freezes. In Wisconsin, the Governor has proposed eliminating a net of 2,000 FTE positions. It's not a pretty picture, and Senator Brashear is drawing our attention to exactly where it should be, and that is in the out years. Because in fact what we are creating today is an infrastructure that will be in place not just for this year or the coming year, but for the years after, and the growth that we build in today will be there to haunt us tomorrow, and I think that we have to bear in mind whether we can in fact afford the kind of structure that we're building.

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR REDFIELD: It's very, very difficult to do this. I know that the Governor agonized over his recommendations and we know that projections of revenue continue to decrease. The people in Nebraska just don't have the money. We wish they did. We wouldn't be here today discussing this. But we live with the realities we have, just as every business, just as every home, and I just wanted to bring these facts and figures to you for your attention. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Redfield. (Visitors introduced.) On with discussion. Senator Smith.

SENATOR SMITH: Thank you, Mr. President and members. A couple comments earlier, a few days ago I should say, were, boy, Adrian, you're sure quiet on these days, and I don't intend to stand up and squawk a lot, but I do want to think out loud, if you'll bear with me. As we approach these issues, in looking at the out biennium for example, it's pretty sobering. And when we look at our tax policy in Nebraska, I mean we...I think we establish tax incentives and have upheld those, and I believe that that's largely in part to our acknowledgement that tax policy can and will affect an economy. And I look at proposals