

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

April 29, 2003      LB 407

years. Judiciary Committee was very helpful in increasing penalties over the years. So people stay in jail longer, so the budget increases. And you know, you and I voted for very enhanced medical care for prisoners just a couple years ago. You remember that? We all voted for it, and that's a very significant part of this 8 percent increase. And what are we going to do about that? Anyway, those are some of the differences there. I don't have much time left. I wanted to skip down to the state aid to local government category, though, and take a look at that, if you will: state aid to schools, TEEOSA, if you're looking at the right-hand column, overall, over the two-year period, -2.4 percent from two years before; aid to community colleges, lower than it was two years ago; aid to cities, -18 percent from what it was two years before; aid to ESUs, -7 percent from what it was two years before; aid to counties, -5.1 percent; and we eliminated completely the \$4.5 million county property tax relief fund in addition. And what did we increase in that category? Special education. We had to. It's a federal law. It's the federal constitution. We have to keep up with special education. That increased 5 percent. And we increased the homestead exemption, because we made a commitment to that. So if you look at all of these heavy cuts in aid to local political subdivisions,...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...this, to me, repeats the point that I was trying to make earlier. This is with the Appropriations Committee budget we're making these heavy cuts to local political subdivisions. If we have to make considerably more cuts, a great deal of it will come out of aid to local political subdivisions, which will in turn exacerbate property taxes. If you're going to be for heavily...for more...for substantially more cuts, then you have to bear the responsibility for additional property taxes. If the Governor wants to cut our budget more and more and more, then the Governor can go to the people and say, I increased your property taxes, and I thought you would like me to do that more than increase your income or sales taxes. And I don't think that will sell. I think people want us to retain the balance that we've achieved between property...