

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

April 30, 2003 LB 411

these kinds of things. That's all. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Maxwell. Senator Cunningham.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: Thank you, Senator Cudaback and members. Well, I'm on the Health Committee and I, unfortunately, had to vote to put this bill out. It was a very tough decision. But just to tell you a little bit about where I am, I haven't spoken on the budget at all to this point. I'm a conservative senator. I didn't think I would vote for tax increases, but the severity of our problems this year is leaving me no other choice. Right now, if we take the Appropriations Committee recommendations as it is, we've got a \$350 million or so problem. And I'm not prepared to vote for that large of a tax increase. Yet, on the other hand, I cannot see another way. If I don't vote for it, it's going to hit education more, and I'm not prepared for that either. So I guess where I am right now, I'm looking for more cuts if we can find them. I'm trying to do everything I can to not add anything back in or on to the Appropriations Committee, any extra money. It's going to be a very, very tough cut, I realize that, but we're going to have to bite the bullet somewhere. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Cunningham. There are no further lights on, Senator Kruse. You're recognized to close on your amendment, AM1617.

SENATOR KRUSE: Mr. President and members, thank you. I appreciate the discussion and your thought on this, and I must say I don't mind putting you on the hook. We're all on the hook. Just want to share it with everybody. The cuts that we are making, many of them do not go away. If you vote to retain this cut, it doesn't go away. The costs don't go away. Those that are ill continue to get ill, and those that need hospitals will have to go there. At the same time, we are facing a very heavy cost of trying to continue government, and I am especially sensitive to that. I deal with a lot of folks that have trouble dealing with that, so I'm not going to tell anybody how to do it. I would suggest to you, however you vote on this, you're rolling the dice. And maybe I'll just leave it there.