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FLOOR DEBATE

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LB 440

Pedersen, Don...Dwite, that is, followed by Senator Thompson, Tyson, Brown, and Stuthman. Senator Thompson. Senator Dwite Pedersen, did you have your light on, Senator Pedersen? He waives that opportunity, so it is your turn, Senator Thompson. We'll get this right yet.

SENATOR THOMPSON: (Laugh) Thank you very much, Mr. President. I just want to...and I appreciate the debate being extended a little bit because I'm having people come up to me and trying to clarify, and I just want you to be clear on what you're voting on. The Appropriations Committee recommendation is AM1414, and that recommendation is to keep MIRF for two years in place and sunset it in two years. That was a 6 to 2 vote and 1 person was absent in the committee to sunset it. That's the issue of being done with it. There are two issues in the amendment that's under consideration, and in the amendment that's under consideration the two issues are the Lincoln issue, which came up because the other cities said, look, we understand Lincoln's problem, but we want the money to go back into the main budget bill in aid so we have more flexibility. So you got the Lincoln issue, which is taken care of with this amendment. Senator Beutler pulled an amendment that would do the exact same thing if you accept the Appropriations Committee recommendation, which is AM1414. So if you vote for AM1661, you're doing two things. You're saying we'll take care of the Lincoln problem, but we're also going to reverse the Appropriations Committee recommendation to sunset MIRF totally. You'll say...you'll be saying sunset MIRF for two years and then put it back. That's the big difference, the big picture difference between these two amendments. We can solve Lincoln's problem on a third amendment that will trail. And in the meeting this morning, what we decided was to let the League of Municipalities, which this is their amendment, AM1661, that Senator Beutler has introduced, with the piece he needs to accomplish for Lincoln, which he supports. That's AM1661. If you adopt that then you're reversing the Appropriations Committee recommendation of AM1414. It goes away. My advice to you is to defeat this amendment and go back to the Appropriations Committee recommendation which is to sunset MIRF. We don't see this situation turning around. The out years are terrible. That would take an incredible swing in the fortunes of the state to bring that revenue back in two