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FLOOR DEBATE

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LB 440

bonding commitments against that legally. So I've changed my mind based on what the committee had done, and I don't apologize for that. It's just, in my mind, it was new information that said that we ought to keep our commitments. It has nothing to do with the dollars. The dollars here, either way we do it, are going to be cut. Just as we always have done for the last hundred and some years, the next budget time, two years hence from now, we will face this issue again on the dollar side of it. So my mind, this argument really is over do you cut MIRF off or don't you? And if I may take it a step further then, do you keep your commitment or don't you through 2009? And that the body can decide that, but I did feel compelled to explain why I've taken a different position than what the committee did, and that's based on what I consider new information in my mind as to what was legally possible under MIRF, and that was to bond. So Lincoln did not break the law, so to speak. It simply did what the law said at the time and we reaffirmed that in April of 2000. So thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: It's now your time, Senator Wehrbein.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: I am done.

SENATOR CUDABACK: There are no further lights on. Senator Beutler, you're recognized to close on your amendment, AM1661.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Cudaback, members of the Legislature, I think it's been a very good debate. And, Senator Bourne, I might say I appreciate your attitude towards the whole process. I really do. I think the hard questions should be asked. If things are complicated, they should be sorted out. I hope through his questions and through the debate that we have that everybody has a pretty good idea of what we're voting on now. But let me say again two things that we're not voting on really. One, either way you go, we're eliminating \$6 million out of the budget. We will either subtract it from MIRF, or we will subtract it from aid to municipalities. So this is not a budget question for the next biennium. Two, it is not matter of giving Lincoln any more money. One way or another the only benefit Lincoln would get is the benefit of being able to use one fund versus another. But the dollar amounts are being adjusted so