

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

May 7, 2003

LB 540

SENATOR BOURNE: What you're saying that, how could you balance a budget without cutting K-12, Corrections and what was the last?

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: Medicaid or...

SENATOR BOURNE: Medicaid, how could you balance the...

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: ...higher ed.

SENATOR BOURNE: ...how could you balance the budget without doing that?

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: And without raising more money.

SENATOR BOURNE: Oh, that would be almost impossible.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: Yeah. And, see, that's the analogy I would make. It would seem to me that's what we're saying to our school systems.

SENATOR BOURNE: I don't think that's a good acknowledge (sic) at all, Senator Cunningham, with all respect. I think it would be...this would be a proper analogy. If we're going to cut Health and Human Services spending, say we're going to cut Medicaid, what a similar amendment in that scenario would be that, okay, we're going to cut eligibility rates but we're not going to cut eligibility rates for children. We're going to say that children, and in this case I'm saying that these are children between the ages of 5 and 21, as our constitution talks about as it relates to education, I'm saying that a similar amendment would be, okay, we're going to cut Medicaid eligibility but we're going to protect the kids, and I think that's a similar situation. So I'm not saying that we shouldn't cut education or that we don't have to. We do. It's obvious. Nobody in here wants to do that, yet we all recognize that we have to, and that's where we're at in this point in the Legislature. All I'm saying is, if we're going to make the cuts, let's make those cuts so it doesn't hurt the kids or, if it does hurt the kids, as minimally as possible. Let's forego the new car for the administration or the motor pool or some