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FLOOR DEBATE

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LB 407

government to debate the issue. And I've learned throughout my five regular sessions in the Legislature that we can't always take a "my way or the highway" approach. And I believe that this proposal has a great deal of merit. And I know that a lot of work has gone into it. And a lot of work has gone into it not only on Senator Erdman's part, but in Senator Erdman's using the Appropriations Committee recommendations in a lot of the line items, and anywhere from the \$2 cut to the Lieutenant Governor's Office in the first year...I kind of got a kick out of that...but, to the more substantial numbers. And it's serious business. And I hope that we can take this opportunity in this second round of debate, Select File, on the budget bill. But I hope that we can continue to have constructive debate. And I would yield the balance of my time to Senator Erdman.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Erdman, about two minutes.

SENATOR ERDMAN: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the Legislature. Let me...first of all, let me say this. I appreciate the comments of Senator Wehrbein. I have no illusions, again, that everything in AM1763 is an easy decision. But again, I go back to the priorities that I outlined and I laid out. And that's where I arrived at the numbers. The other thing that I'll also tell you is, is that under the amendment...and if you would like, you can follow this on your computer, since it's there, as opposed to actually printing off all 180 sheets. On page 37, line 14, it says, it is the intent of the Legislature that the reduction in funding shall be allocated to central office and middle management staff and that such reduction shall not be allocated to direct care staff. I don't know how many times I have...and I had an interim study last year to review how many levels of management we have at HHS, from the person that's on the front lines till they get to the top. I mean, there are some areas where it's probably 7-8 people deep. And all those individuals are valuable to the system, but are they valuable to the absolute best quality care that we're...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR ERDMAN: ...asking for our citizens to receive under the