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LB 407

citizens of the state of Nebraska we did what you told us to do; we protected the areas that you told us to protect and we did it responsibly. I think we can do that. I think we have done it. All we have to do is put it together in one form in a package that says this is our best effort, this is what you have hired us to do. I think we can do that and I'm willing to work on any compromise. Thank you.

SPEAKER BROMM: Thank you, Senator Erdman. Senator Brown.

SENATOR BROWN: Mr. Speaker and members, though I appreciate Senator Erdman's efforts, I think this morning's discussion shows the difficulty that we have in dealing, 49 of us on the floor, with each and every specific. And also having served on Appropriations Committee, I understand what it's like to have done that and, depending on the way you quote this quote, it's either the angel or the devil is in the details. Well, the Appropriations Committee has spent the last few months wrestling with either angels or devils and I don't know that we're going to do a really good job trying to figure out which one is which without some more of a road map than we have. I, too, have had discomfort with the bottom line numbers and I would disagree a little bit with Senator Pederson. I understand that they had to make decisions based on what they thought were the best interests of the state, but the other side of that is that the best interests of the state are also represented by our taxation level, and we have to be somewhere where we can feel a little bit more comfortable. And I'm more comfortable with Senator Erdman's bottom line, but I'm just not as comfortable at how we get there as having nine different people arguing out, on a very laborious method, each and every line item. If I'm uncomfortable with the spending level that we're at then I think that...and if everyone keeps saying that they are uncomfortable with the spending level, then we should have sent the bill back to committee and let the committee make the recommendations about where those cuts need to come from. But I am very intrigued by one of the underlying premises of Senator Erdman's proposal, and that is that we have to do real, meaningful and significant reform in the areas of Medicaid, the educational system, and Corrections. But to do those things, we need to have a vision of where we're going and we need to be very strong