

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

May 14, 2003

LB 407

I guess make for interesting reading. I feel frustrated at times, but I do also understand the process. I also understand that my opinion is my opinion. And I did my best to offer to the body and I believe that some of the things that I offered to the body are now showing up, for whatever reason. So from that standpoint, I am at least grateful that we have began the discussion. I am a little bit...I'm going to wonder out loud if we're willing to also find additional money in other parts of the budget; if we're actually at the point where we can't look anywhere else. I've been told repeatedly and I sincerely believe the Appropriations Committee believes this, especially Senator Wehrbein, that this is where we would have to go, but if we're going to have to go here why can't we have to go somewhere else as well? Why can't we force some things to happen elsewhere? Why can't we look at the budget and say, you know what, we need to be protecting, we need to set some priorities and those are, one, how we spend the money, instead of trying to bring everybody, like we continually are doing, into a big pot and trying to hold everybody in this big pot? We're trying to get votes. I understand that. But the reality is, is when you're trying to get the votes, I think at the end of the day we also need to make sure that when we've gotten those votes at the end of that time we've been able to point to priorities and say, we tried to protect these things, we've tried to protect those things, we're willing to give up on these in order to protect whatever. So, while I appreciate this, I'm going to continue to listen. I'm hopeful that there will be other individuals and more willingness, I guess, to begin to look at other parts of the budget. I know they're not easy decisions. I know that what I offered yesterday obviously wasn't the answer, but it was a number and it was a place to start, and I think it's a reasonable attempt to let you know exactly where I am. Obviously, it was about where 15 other members were. I don't know if we vote for this if that means that now we're okay with everything, because I'll tell you that I, if I would vote for this, it doesn't mean I'm voting for everything else in this package, because I do believe that we need to continue to look further and further. And if we're going to take this off the table...which is what I did to my amendment. I went to a level on education, I took them off the table, and then we started looking at other areas. And I found out that some of those