

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

May 27, 2003

LB 407

middle of probably the...one of the hardest years that has ever been faced in the Legislature. Before I came in, people were saying, you're going to have to make the hard decisions this year, you know. Wouldn't you rather have a root canal? And I said, no, I think this is a job I want to take on, I want to try to do. I have the utmost respect for our Appropriations Committee, for our Revenue Committee, the people who sat for hours and listened to, line by line, commissions, agencies, people who receive money from our budget, listened to the people involved, and went through reams of papers and documents and studied them. Nine of our most trusted and respected members. And they came up with a proposal. They came up with a proposal, as well as did the Governor. Then we had the...our revenue forecasting board, who also came up with adjustment figures. Oops, we don't have as much coming in as what we thought. Therefore, it's projected down. Our Appropriations Committee, they adjusted down. I don't know what the Governor did with his plan. He might have adjusted it down. I understand from Chris Peterson this morning, and from Senator Wehrbein, that it is still many, many millions below what's required. We adjusted again when the revenue forecasting board said we would not have enough money. We cut. Our economy was on the way to the hospital to have some surgery this year. But we had a wreck on the way to the hospital. We had a bad car accident. After 9-11, the bottom fell out of everything. And we got a beat up, busted up patient laying on the ER table, like I mentioned this morning, who's in shock. We cannot operate on a patient in shock. You have to stabilize that patient. You have to give them a little blood, a little plasma expander, give them time to come around, let that blood pressure come up a little bit. It doesn't mean you're not going to do surgery. It means you're going to do the same surgery you were going to do before, but you're going to wait until the patient is stable. In January, our Governor told us we need stout fiscal medicine, and it was going to be hard to swallow. And boy, was he right. This is stout fiscal medicine. And I don't know if when you all were little you had to take it, but did you ever have to take Fletcher's Castoria for Children? That's like...that was like the 1960s version of castor oil. Well, we had to take it at my house. We didn't like it. So what we got in front of us is, we got two bottles. We got Fletcher's Castoria, and we got