

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

March 18, 2004      LB 1089

temporary because I think with a reasonable return of revenue streams with better economic times, revenue streams more closely approaching historic averages, I believe we can support ongoing appropriations without a permanent tax increase. But we cannot pay the low-level judgment, which is \$160 million. But, you say, we may not have to pay the low-level judgment until next year or we may not have to pay it at all in part or in whole. Let's put aside that debate for the moment as to whether we have to pay that and how much and when, and say for the sake of argument that the low-level suit goes away.

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR BEUTLER: We don't need the money for that purpose, so what do we do with that \$112 million that we collected? I would argue that we use the money to negate or effectively mitigate the \$100 million that we cut in state aid to schools. We could, in fact, reverse the state aid decision and the levy limit increase to \$1.10 in the next session before it goes into effect if we have money to do that. In other words, instead of choosing a property tax increase, as we are certainly doing with this budget, we could use...we could choose a temporary increase in sales-income or utility sales tax, and that, I think, in my opinion,...

SENATOR CUDABACK: Time.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...would be a better course, and I hope that that discussion is focused upon. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Senator Hartnett, on AM3033.

SENATOR HARTNETT: Mr. President, members of the body, I was going to give my time to Senator Beutler but I want to echo some of the words that he said related to the budget as presented to us. Because what we're really doing, I think we made a promise, I guess, I was on the Revenue Committee back when we kind of put this package together dealing with the \$1 and so forth, and I think it was the late Jerome Warner, his idea was that we would, as a Legislature, we would have a property tax burden on