

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

March 19, 2004      LB 1091

PRESIDENT HEINEMAN:    Thank you, Senator Chambers.    Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER:      Mr. Lieutenant Governor, members of the Legislature, Senator Raikes, thank you for putting this together.    I think it's a very well-done piece that helps to clarify the way certain funds are moving around, especially in health related areas.    But it is kind of an interesting phenomena to me that in this year when we have absolutely no money for new programs, that suddenly we have initiatives for three or four very expensive programs.    And of these initiatives, almost all of them are coming from the Governor's Office.    These initiatives that are shown for child welfare on Senator Raikes' sheet, behavioral health reform, research center for excellence, emergency protective services, all are the Governor's programs, plus the water policy money is a recommendation of the Governor.    They are all good programs, in my opinion.    I'm going to vote for them.    I don't know if people want to examine them in terms of whether as much money as is being requested is necessary, but you have to understand that one of the things that the Appropriations Committee was trying to do was to accommodate these new initiatives in the face of a budget situation where there is absolutely no money for any new initiatives.    So there's been a real effort to accommodate this, and whether we should or we shouldn't, everybody is going to have to make up their own mind on the individual initiatives involved.    And of course, sooner or later, as these bills comes...bills come around, you will have the opportunity to do that.    And I just wanted to point out another one of the problems that was dealt with by the Appropriations Committee in trying to accommodate everybody's wishes and desires this year.    Thank you.

PRESIDENT HEINEMAN:    Thank you, Senator Beutler.    Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS:      Thank you.    Mr. President, at this point, I would like to ask Senator Wehrbein a question or two.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN:      Yes.