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FLOOR DEBATE

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amount due schools. How do you come up with the money to provide the funding specified in the needs calculation? And that third program was to increase the school levy limit to \$1.05 and the local effort rate to 95 cents. So, in effect, what the...what you did last session, what the Legislature did last session in addressing school finance, you said the total amount of money that we'll recognize as being required by school districts to spend is going to be lowered. And then of that smaller amount, we're changing the division of responsibility. We're making more of it a local responsibility, and less of it a state responsibility, and that's where we are now. Those three programs are in place for the current fiscal year. They will also be in place for the next fiscal year, the one that ends June 30, 2005. LB 1093 deals with the next biennium, the school year beginning 2005-2006. The current biennium is, in essence, covered, or at least it's not dealt with in LB 1093. Why would you deal with the next biennium at this point? Can we just put this off? Well, the answer is you could. My view is it would not be prudent to do so. An important reason is this. State aid is certified February 1, so on February 1 the state provides information to school districts about how much state aid will be provided to them in the school year beginning in August following that February 1, so this is...this is planning information. If...there's no way, if we don't act to change the funding available for 2005-2006 now, there's not a way we could do it before February 1 of next year in the next session. So in my...the reason we...the reason we're doing this now is because it is really our only opportunity to provide a smooth transition, if you will, and provide planning, financial planning information to school districts. All right. Importantly, what does the green copy of LB 1093 do? It extends two of the three programs I mentioned indefinitely. The temporary aid adjustment, according to the green copy of LB 1093, is misnamed, because it would in effect become a permanent aid adjustment. The second thing is the \$1.05 levy would also become permanent. The reduction of spending authority or the continuation of the 0 percent budget lid is not a part of LB 1093. So what the green copy does, again, is extends two of the programs that are currently in place on an indefinite basis--the levy lid and the temporary aid adjustment. The next step is the committee amendments, and I'll wait for my