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FLOOR DEBATE

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and really, due to no action of her own but because her opponents had some issues with the details of the rules and didn't jump through all the rather large loopholes, but certainly it comes down to, should public funds be used that should go to the school fund. Now Senator Beutler says that this has nothing to do with the budget. Most certainly it does. We talk about school funds, how much goes to K-12 education and, you know, when dollars are plugged in here, they can come out over here, and we do that a lot. And, in fact, that's what the whole debate is about property tax and the issues relating to property tax and how they're connected to other issues in the budget, primarily K-12 education. But certainly this is an issue that I think is budget-related and I want to be very emphatic about that, but it does not wipe it out. In fact, more than a third of it remains, and it would still leave more than the \$112,000 paid out in Fiscal Year '02 to the Byrd campaign, and the year before that with almost \$28,000 to another campaign. But it all goes back to the state constitution providing that these penalties should go to the school fund. Why? Because you don't want someone levying a penalty if they, in turn, get to spend it, spend those same dollars. That's the whole provision contained in the state constitution and the reasons behind that. And this does not take the original General Fund appropriation away. In fact, it even leaves some other funds like the checkoff dollars, and someone even made a \$14 contribution on their own to the campaign finance fund, and that's the only single contribution that was made. But this is a very real issue and it comes down really to do you believe that these funds should be spent in such a way when the state constitution specifically, very specifically, provides otherwise? Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR HARTNETT: Thank you, Senator Smith. Senator Brashear, you're next.

SENATOR BRASHEAR: Mr. President, members of the body, if I could...I think the record is pretty clear, if I could repeal the Campaign Finance Limitation Act, I would, but you haven't let that happen. I've persistently tried to keep this issue in front of the body and will continue to do so in my short remaining time. I have very much appreciated, and am very