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FLOOR DEBATE

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an electric surcharge on, not to raise gas taxes, not to float bonds for road construction. That is a solution out there that, however unpalatable that may seem to the body, it would suffice, it would fulfill our constitutional obligations that we have here to balance the budget, and it is another option that we haven't discussed in full as of yet. And so I would just posit that for the body for discussion.

SPEAKER BROMM: Thank you, Senator Quandahl. Senator Friend.

SENATOR FRIEND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members of the Legislature, let's...oddly enough, I'd like to...I don't think that I possibly could, because I couldn't do it justice, echo those statements that were made previous to mine. Let's...but let's play hypothetical here. Let's say we lived in Utopia and we didn't have this judgment sitting over our head, okay? We can't do that, but let's just take about, I don't know, four more minutes to do that. I think we've come to the realization now, or at least there's a feeling, that we've determined that we do have the cash flow to get through June of 2005. While not optimum...or not an optimum situation, it would allow us...for us to do...for a couple of things to happen. We don't know what the economy is going to do. I can tell you this, I'd like to take advantage of some more economic growth. This is not putting off till tomorrow, or this idea that's flowing around right now on the floor is not putting off tomorrow what you can do today. What it's putting off is the opportunity for us to possibly take advan...it's actually not putting anything off. What it's doing for us is giving us an opportunity to take advantage of some potential economic growth. What I will say is this, I firmly believe this, if we as a body approve tax increases which would amount to, for all intents and purposes, a third year in a row of that type of effort, then that economic growth that I would be looking for, I believe that would be significantly hindered. It already has been. And I think it would be further hindered by this type of philosophy. I think we can pull the reins back. I think we can look at this situation and say, let's let the economy dictate to us what these revenues are going to look like. Because I tell you this, if we raise income taxes, my feeling is, we will lose revenue. These numbers are going to look far worse a year from now than