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Transcriber's Office  
FLOOR DEBATE

April 1, 2004            LB 1090

SENATOR JONES: Mr. President and members of the body, I know we got a Senator Chambers amendment up there, but don't seem like anybody is talking about it, so I'll go ahead and talk about Senator Brashear's amendment. And I am opposed to AM3477. This bonding is a whole new policy and I don't think we're ready to go down that road. And I've heard some experiences from other states in what's happened there, and I just don't think that that's the right way to go. I think Senator Bromm put it pretty good the other day when he says what kind of a credit card would that be and how big would it be; what color would it be; and it'd be tempting to use it for other things as we go forward. And Senator Pedersen brought out a good point. The senators that's running now is going to have a big challenge in two years from now simply because the biggest share of all the Chairs are all going to be gone two years from now. So it's going to be a big challenge here and I don't think we need to leave that debt and burden on them, let alone our children, our grandchildren down the line. And that this judgment is not known yet for sure, and I still think we need to sit back and see when it's going to come down and how much it's going to do. And I think doing nothing is an option, and that's what I'm supporting today--doing nothing till we see if we can get by, because I understand that we can get by as far as our other budget is concerned, except for the judgment, until July 1 of 2005. So I think that that's what we're going to end up doing here today because I don't think there's going to be 25 votes to get any plan together that we've talked about. And I guess I'm really kind of concerned on the bonds, too, as whether they can be sold in a timely manner to handle the jobs that's out there, that they've already, some of them, been contracted for and that way. And Senator Landis brought up something, too, that I didn't support at the time, but the half-cent increase we had in the sales tax that we had in the Cash Reserve, a year ago we moved that from there on over to the General Fund, and that is being spent there. But anyway, I think we need to wait until we need the money and then come back and try to raise it. I guess I shouldn't be saying that because maybe I'm leaving, but I think we'll know that before this year is up. And I'm sure if we get the judgment down, there will probably be a special session in November to handle that. And so I think that that's the route we need to go, because right now I cannot see raising the money