

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

April 15, 2004

and none of this would have been worth it at all without their support. I don't know where to begin and end, except to say I need to...I need to offer a big thanks to my staff. Current staff--Jen Roberts and Jeanette Thiem and Laurie Weber--whatever accolades that I get here belongs to them, because none of this would have worked, certainly the agenda would have been a disaster, and lots of decisions would have not been quite as wise in retrospect had it not been for their help, and I thank them. And also prior staff members, of which there were several, and I won't go into all those, but they know who they are and I thank them from the bottom of my heart. I can't say enough...I think as Speaker you realize more intimately the workings of the Legislature than you do otherwise. And the Clerk, Patrick, and Dick Brown, Carol, Vicki, and Diana up here, and the rest of their staff, as Senator Hartnett and others have alluded to, they really do a great job and they make this place work and they give us timely advice and they have the experience that goes beyond and before our time here, and that is of great value. So some have spoken about term limits and that worries me a lot, but it does help assure me a little bit that there will be some long-term institutional memory right here as long as these people are working and helping us. I can't go without saying thanks to my...when I came in here and I had all these kids in school and so forth, I had the responsibility for a full-time business as well. Wasn't sure we could make all that work, but my...I have some great...I have some great partners and staff in my office in Wahoo and I'm very grateful to them, for their sacrifice and their support. There will be some just great memories here and have certainly...I will think of those as time goes by, but today I couldn't help but think of one as the Governor came in with our good First Lady, Stephanie. And a few short years ago I was sitting in Senator Mossey's chair, and Senator Landis has been where he's been forever, and they came in for the last day or the first day, I think it was the last day, and Stephanie is prone to give lots of hugs, and of course she was hugging everyone and Senator Landis was overcome. He turns around, he hugs me just as (laugh) as big as life, and I hadn't been here too long before that happened. (Laughter) So I turned around and Senator Wickersham was over there in my seat and I turned to Bob and I said, Bob, do I have lipstick on my cheek? (Laughter) And he said (laugh) he said, no, but he