

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

January 5, 2005

of Vice Chairman. And in Vice-Chairman position, I have had the opportunity to work with the Governor's Office, the other committee Chairs and so forth in helping to work our way through the various problems that we've had as far as revenue is concerned. Now I think we're moving into a little different stage. We're moving into a stage where it appears that our revenue is starting to come back, which would tell you that it's not good but it's not as bad as it was. But, unfortunately, when it's announced that we have additional money, then everybody thinks, well, we've been cut back so much, now is the time we better put our request in. And I think it's important, from our standpoint, to see what their needs are. So I've not discouraged anybody in their agencies from telling us what they really need, and then we have to sort through those needs and evaluate that in connection with the revenue that we have. I've appreciated working on the committee and I would like to continue in that respect. I think we have a...we have a bright future. I think we have to work with remembering that what we are distributing on the Appropriations Committee is the people's money, and we have to keep that in mind, but we have certain core things that we have to do and those are, number one, we have to provide for people who can't provide for themselves. We have to provide educational opportunities for all of our young people. In order to make that effective, we also have to have industrial development that takes place so there are jobs for people once they get out of school. So we're working on that. When I worked with the educational task force, which I told all of you about at the time we had the Platte River forum, I feel it's important that we...that we make as effective use of our higher education as we can because we have finite dollars and infinite needs, and so we have to use those needs as prudently as we can. When it appeared that there was a vacancy in the Chairmanship of the Appropriations Committee, I was encouraged by members of that committee to seek the position of Chair. It's a very important committee. I think it's...I think it's terribly important. And I thought that what we would need is somebody who had both experience and the capabilities. I know I have the experience and it's up to you as to whether you think I have the capabilities. But I would ask you...I wasn't running against anybody when I filed for this. I was running because I saw there was a need and, once I said that I was going to run