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they have responded better? Perhaps. I don't know. But I do think they're up against the wall in terms of their levy authority and their budget authority. They're trying to provide educational services to the kids. And, quite honestly, as we cut Medicaid and cut other programs, as we have for the last several years, the school...the obligation on behalf of the schools to society has increased. And I think we've cut their budget, we've cut other budgets, and the need for some of those services that we have cut doesn't go away. People simply look to different sources, and they're looking to the schools. I think that this is an appropriate exception to the levy and budget limits that we have. Again, I don't believe that the budget authority or the budget limit was put there to control school districts from responding to uncontrollable costs, and that's what we're asking them to do. This is a significant increase in their obligation, their retirement fund obligation, and we're simply saying, all right, we understand that. It's a...it's not a once in a lifetime occurrence, but it's rare that we have such underfunding in our retirement funds. We're going to give them a little help. That's it. And again, what Senator Landis mentioned is accurate, but I do want to point out that what we're allowing them to do through these two...through this amendment, the levy and budget authority, is raise up to the amount that they might have to raise to respond to the shortfall. The shortfall might not be \$15 million. If the market comes back, it will not be that expensive.

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR BOURNE: And I want to point out, say it is the absolutely worst case scenario, that they are able to raise \$15 million. The school budget is about \$900 million. So, you know, my sense is that this isn't...yes, it is a property tax increase in the first year or two, and then it's a reduction in property tax increase...a reduction of the property tax in the long run, but I do think that this is something that we should do as a policy. We should help these school districts respond to this unforeseen, uncontrollable cost of theirs. And again, I urge your adoption of this amendment. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Bourne. Senator Pederson,