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FLOOR DEBATE

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healthy, political pressure was levied on the Department of Labor, from both the legislative and the executive branch of the government, and the Governor caved in, and they started cutting the rates that were in effect at the time. And \$50 million or more disappeared from that fund before, before the upturn in unemployment started. And then, as the upturn in unemployment started, the problem, of course, became exacerbated. But for that inappropriate, unwise cutting of the rates, which provided the long-term stability, but for that, we would not be in crisis today. Yes, we may have to make...we may have had to make certain adjustments, but they would have been in the order of adjustments that we make every three or four or five years. I go back to mention that simply because I do not believe the common worker and the laborer should be punished by political shortsightedness on the part of any political figure or on the part, then, because of them, of this government. And so I look at this whole discussion in terms of preventing, to the best that I can, any undue, inappropriate reduction in worker benefits. Some of these charts...let me pause at this point and also say some good things, though. Regardless of how we got here and why we got here, I think Senator Cunningham has done us a great service in working with the Labor Department, in working with employers, and in working with employees to put in effect this automatic adjustment system that is in the bill. Because what that will tend to do is to put into statute a system, and resist these impulses by governors and others to cut reserve funds in good times and then have a crisis in the bad times. I mean, this is not just characteristic of this reserve fund. And maybe there's something to be learned from this reserve fund in the way it's being handled here now, or proposed, and our general state reserve fund. Because the same Governor that cut this reserve fund in good times cut our general state reserve fund in good times, and on a one-time basis handed...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...money back to the property tax owners, to property tax payers. Consequently, we didn't have adequate money in our reserve fund at the state level to deal with the same crisis that has caused the depletion of this trust fund. We don't seem to learn. But maybe there is an inspirational