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LB 38

state is the community colleges. And we have to address that issue. But aside from the fact that it's the fastest growing, we just haven't been able to maintain the state's portion of helping the community colleges. Currently, and tonight we're going to talk in the Appropriations Committee about the agency request of community colleges. And they would like us to make up the shortfall on the amount that they were eligible for, for state aid, of \$17-plus million for each of the next two years. We can't do that. But it's on the books. It shows where we are in connection with funding mechanisms. So it's been a difficult issue. And as long as I've been on the Appropriations Committee, I think we've had a problem with Norfolk, because it keeps expanding, and its ability to cope with the expansion has just not been there. So I think we have to address that particular issue. So I think the things that I'd like you to bear in mind with this is, for the bulk of the law, this is no different than extending what is currently there, that is, the levy authority. And I would tell you that the levy authority has not been abused in any fashion by the community colleges. They've maintained the integrity of the system. But it gives them the authority to expand. I think we have to address the issue that expansion is taking place, and we have to cope with it. We have to give them the tools with which to cope with it. I think it's been well addressed by the previous speakers. I won't go into the issues there. But I heartily endorse this program. And not only the base program of maintaining and extending the existing situation in regard to levy, but also the fact that if you have a problem area...and all of the community colleges have obviously joined in a recognition of the impact that this will have as far as Northeast is concerned, and they've said, this is what we have to do. And I think, as a Legislature, I think we have to address it and say, this is what we have to do. I would urge you to adopt the amendment and the underlying bill. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Pederson. Further discussion. Senator Connealy, followed by Senator Bourne.

SENATOR CONNEALY: Thank you, Mr. President, members. I pretty well agree with everything that's been said. I think that this is the way we have to do it. I don't think this is the right