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SENATOR CHAMBERS: Oh, thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Chambers. Senator Erdman, followed by Senator Smith.

SENATOR ERDMAN: Thank you, Mr. President. Members of the Legislature, I feel like I need to clarify my comments, and I think Senator Pederson's comments were on target. The money that is...or the benefit, I guess, from the state, if you want to call it economic development or return on your investment, has been great, and I think Senator Jensen has pointed that out. My opposition to the bill, and if you'll actually read the bill and the committee amendment, it doesn't target where the money goes. It just adds the extra money and then that would be dealt with in a separate situation. But if it is that important for us to be able to put more money into that area that we, as a body, agreed to, those of us who were here under LB 692, with intent language that we have since diverted from and have been taking that intent language out as far as future appropriations. But if our...if our true goal is to get back to what the intent was, then we should be at the \$14 million amount instead of the \$10 or \$12 million amount. But my ultimate goal is let's prioritize it. If it is that important, and I think Senator Pederson has made a great case, then let's say we need to put this money in here and let's make an offset. Let's make an offset in the fund so that later on we haven't set an example for those who may follow us. Regardless whether they pay attention or not, they'll look back and say, they made those decisions in prioritizing where that money should be spent. The reason why other states have gotten in trouble with their settlement funds is because they haven't done that. You're absolutely correct, Senator Pederson, that we are held up as an example for how you should set up the state's funding using the Master Settlement Agreement and the money that comes from that. I don't dispute that whatsoever. My concern is that we should be setting priorities instead of just adding to the fund. I'm hesitant to move forward. It doesn't mean that I think this is a bad idea. It doesn't mean that I think that this is irresponsible in some way. My level of comfort is not to the point where I can press green. And people were asking me why I