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LB 425

SENATOR D. PEDERSON: Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: There are committee amendments, as stated by the Clerk. As Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Senator Pederson, you're recognized to open on AM0521.

SENATOR D. PEDERSON: Thank you, Mr. President. And I would say that since the amendment becomes the bill, I will just continue on with what I was saying. Other matters that were not considered were the fact...oh, and by the way, the Governor's proposal concerning higher education was a funding of actual needs of the university system, for example, at 74 percent of their actual needs; for the state colleges, 69 percent of their actual needs. Now, if you take those figures, what does that leave? We're providing these educations for our students. And yet, you can't just suddenly drop programs. So the only way that they could handle a financial situation such as that would be to increase the tuition. And because of the cuts that had been made before, you remember that the university has had to increase tuition by over 10 percent. And this would add on to that. And this is at a time when it's more and more difficult for our young people to go to the higher education. And in the state colleges, the same situation exists, except that there is less affluence in the state college area for being able to accept such tuition increases. So that's the trade-off, would be to do that. But the interesting thing is, we are able to do this, we are able to increase to the level that we have provided in LB 425, and still have benefit for our students to be able to enroll in that respect. Another difference that we are doing as far as the budget differences with the Governor is that the Governor did not fund special education. Now, special education is a complete different ball game. But what happens with special education? If we don't fund it, then the local school district has to fund it, and they have to fund it out of their current monies. And in addition to that, what happens, that affects the local taxpayers, because they have to come up with additional monies in order to defray that cost of special education. And what has happened then after the special education proposal, we would have a problem down the line. Because two years from now is when special education would hit