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FLOOR DEBATE

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LB 1060

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...who are looking at these things make a decision.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Erdman. Senator Beutler, you're next. You may continue.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Cudaback, I just want to repeat, in case I forgot to indicate, there is an amendment coming up after this amendment that reduces the cultural trust from \$5 million to \$2 million. And my plea to you would be to reject this amendment and to adopt the amendment forthcoming that will reduce it to \$2 million. Let me address the history of this matter a little bit. First of all, the information I have indicates that when the original bill was filed in 1998, and to the extent that people thought this would be...might be a one-time shot, it was a \$25 million endowment. Okay? So that's a little bit different. Twenty-five million dollars came down to \$5 million. And at the time...the Governor at the time indicated that he would do another \$5 million shortly. Well, the economy went south on us, and nobody wanted to do another \$5 million shortly. And now we're back around to that cycle...that part of the cycle where we can afford to make an investment like this. With respect to the document that was passed around to you, this is floor debate, as I understand it, from Senator Maurstad. Senator Maurstad was not the sponsor of the bill. His intent means nothing except that it's his intent. He was not the Chair of the committee, I don't believe, so it doesn't even mean anything in terms of what the committee might have intended. So this has absolutely no meaning whatsoever, other than one senator...one individual, Senator Maurstad, thought, contrary to what everybody else thought, that there would be no further money requested in the future. So I'm not sure the...part of the reason that I took this project on in the first place is because a great many people in the arts community--and I have to believe it's true--believed that if not the \$25 million, that there would be forthcoming another \$5 million when the budget allowed that again. Well, nobody can make promises for the future. But I feel quite confident that it was neither Senator Crosby's expectation nor anybody else who was a proponent of the bill, except perhaps Senator Maurstad, that there would never ever be any additional funds requested.