

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
Transcriber's Office

February 26, 1999 LB 446

changes are also very expensive. And, as I went through the budget this year, the most exasperating aspect of it was that almost every large agency was demanding that technology be updated, and there were enormous expenses that...as you will see the budget this year, there is the enormous group of expenditures that have to do with continually upgrading or maintaining computerized technologies, communications technologies generally, data bank technologies. And I suppose all of that is good. I think generally it is good. But, at the same time, it doesn't seem to me like we should be doing it simply because it's there and it can be done; that we ought to be asking ourselves the questions that we would ask ourselves if technology wasn't involved at all; that is, whether the cost, the additional cost that we're putting into this, is worth the additional benefit that we're getting out of it. And are those costs continuing to be paid by the entities that traditionally have paid for it, or are we shifting costs to other areas? As of this moment in time, at least, I haven't heard yet what the analysis is in terms of what's this...what is this going to save us in lives, what is this going to save us in property damage if we get this new technology, or these combinations of technologies. It's going to be very expensive as I understand it, and, Senator Bromm, correct me if I'm wrong, but we're talking in the neighborhood of at least about \$75 million or so? He shakes his head "yes". That's a huge hunk of money. And I sat on the Appropriations Committee and I know that you all are disturbed from time to time at the Appropriations Committee because they seem to spend most of the money and then there's nothing left out here for A bills, and, yet, as I sat and listened to the budget problems and the past A bills that now have a due date on them for the appropriation, it didn't seem to me that the Appropriations Committee was being anything other than very conservative. And, yet, we ended up with a budget...

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: One minute.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...of about 3.1 percent which, depending on your point of view as to how much money you want to spend this bill, there's nothing left for A bills this year, in a very, very good year as far as revenues are concerned. But, frankly, a part, a significant part of what we are finding it necessary to do has to do with huge changeovers in technology, one of them