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FLOOR DEBATE

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for the state. Now, the State Auditor, of course, can already do financial audits, but there are some good reasons, I think, that we need to have performance audits done. And at that time, really nobody was doing them. Well, I learned, during the discussion of that bill, that not all states have their state auditor doing performance audits. In fact, the majority of the states do the audits, the performance audits, through their Legislature, through their legislative branch, and the theory behind this is that the Legislature makes the policy decisions and the Legislature should be the one to see if those policy decisions are being carried out, and rather than have the executive branch overlooking the executive branch. Now there's arguments all over the board on that one and you can feel as you do about that, but the upshot is that I came to believe that the Legislature did need to have a handle on what was going on with performance audits, and that no bill that gave the State Auditor unlimited authority to do those audits was probably ever going to pass this Legislature. And so my staff and I began looking at how other states perhaps were doing performance audits, and we ran across a provision in Washington's law that said the State Auditor could do performance audits with the help of or with the approval, through statute, of the Legislature. And we began to look at that as an option and that basically is what the underlying LB 607 was. Now, while I'm talking about this, I should also mention that Senator Redfield also has been working on this issue for several years and has introduced several bills before the committee, doing...giving the State Auditor this maybe unlimited ability to do performance audits. Senator Redfield, I am sure, will probably speak to the bill, but she did come to me and expressed her support of the kind of approach that we developed over a period of time through the committee. So, basically, what the bill originally did, it allowed the State Auditor to conduct performance evaluations of state executive branch entities when expressly authorized by the Legislature through state statute. And the auditor would be required to issue the performance evaluation report to the Director of Administrative Services, which is the appropriate standing committee of the Legislature, and the Legislative Program Evaluation Committee. And that's what the original LB 607 did, Mr. President. And with that, I'm going to ask if Senator Combs would like any of the time that I have left, and