

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

April 29, 2003

LB 407, 460

in. Mr. President and colleagues, something I wanted to relate the last time, and ran out of time, was, I think as this develops, one of the things we need to decide is how this budget is going to take shape. We've had a revenue proposal out here that we've done some work with, and advanced something. We've got another revenue proposal still sitting in Revenue Committee that I understand that they're going to be doing some work with perhaps. We have this proposal, and we have a pretty huge gap in between what our known plans are on revenues and what the appropriations suggestion is. There are several ways that this could take shape. If we were extremely fortunate and could find the solution on General File, that would be astounding, especially those that predict that we'll go into special session to solve the problem. So it's probably unlikely we'll find the total solution here, but I think this debate and discussion is helpful, at least I've found it to be. And if we do not have the perfect solution, it would be my hope that we'd have enough assurances between us to continue to work on it between General and Select. And that could take many different forms. What I would hate to see is have us do something that just barely gets over the finish line, and have the Governor craft the budget for us through his gubernatorial veto powers, which he has a right to do. But in this serious of a problem, I think we need to craft the budget in such a way that we can get behind it. And if all goes well, perhaps the Governor might also be able to support it in the end. I certainly don't know that. But I would like to find something that we can get strongly behind, even though we might have to swallow hard to do many, many parts of it. Another issue I'd like to bring up in this time, Senator Synowiecki has had an idea for a couple of years that has had a lot of appeal to me. And when it surfaced that we...one of our highest rates of growth in our budget is medical care costs, I have to ask Senator Brashear and others in Judiciary, what about LB 460, which is the copay bill for medical expense? And I see some thumbs down on that side of the room. But I haven't heard any ideas about how we're going to help solve that problem. If there are other ideas other than Senator Synowiecki's, I'd like to hear them. We cannot afford...I mean, we're faced with cutting lots of things, including looking at healthcare to children, healthcare to unwed mothers and other people, while the healthcare at the prison is skyrocketing. Are there that