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Appropriations Committee  
March 17, 2017

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[AGENCY 03]

SENATOR STINNER: Okay. We'll open the hearing on Agency 3, Legislative Council. Senator Watermeier. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: (Exhibit 1) Good afternoon, Chairman Stinner and Appropriations Committee. Thank you for having me here today. For the record, my name is Senator Dan Watermeier, W-a-t-e-r-m-e-i-e-r. I am here as Chairman of the Executive Board, testifying in regard to the budget of the Legislative Council 03. On behalf of the Executive Board, I'd like to thank you for the appropriations that we did take in the preliminary budget reductions in the recommendations. As you know, around 87 percent of the Council's budget is senators' and staffs' compensation. With the committee recommendations and by shifting some funds between programs, we believe that we will be able to sustain our core operations and our current staffing levels. However, there are some projects that were in planning stages that we will not be able to complete unless this committee restores \$1.2 million that was lapsed in the unexpended funds or the reappropriations funds. These projects include...and I'm going to hand out this here too. Sorry. These projects include updating the Chamber and the hearing room audio/video systems; second is updating the display boards in the Chamber, which are on both sides of the voting board; purchasing telephone equipment for all the legislative offices. These telephones would replace obsolete phones and provide for an advanced safety and warning system. The current panic buttons which would be replaced, our actual reoccurring monthly cost would actually go down. We would also like to use some of this money as a contingency for the HVAC project to pay for some unknown and unexpected expenses associated with legislative offices being moved within the Capitol and outside the Capitol. I do also want to go on record and tell you what we will not be able to fund so that there are no surprises down the road, and actually put it on record. Based on some of the committee's recommendations that we did two and three weeks ago, one of the recommendations were that senators would be limited to \$1,500 instead of \$2,500 for reimbursement of out-of-state travel. In many instances, the \$1,500 will not cover the full cost of an out-of-state trip, just so long as we're aware of that. We will not move forward on a project to provide closed-captioning for the committee hearings. And we will not rewrite and upgrade the Legislative Journal program. That will be delayed for a few years. There will be no contingency money for unexpected technology failures, and we did have an example of this just last week.

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We had a \$25,000 switch that failed in our IT department and we had to swallow that internally, so we're not going to add any dollars for any contingency fees. There is no contingency money for contractual services. Other than that, for the current ongoing contracts, right now we have Dana Cole who is here every year to verify our expenses and our travel expenses of senators, so that's something we do on an ongoing basis, and an actuarial for the Retirement Committee. So if the Retirement Committee passes a bill or a study then we are required to provide them with an actuarial. I'm sure that Senator Clements would love to do it for free, but we are required to hire one so we have to commit with that. The other thing that we would...I would liked to have done, and I said I would liked to have done three years ago on Executive Board, was talk about succession planning. If someone leaves, we would like to have the ability to get someone on board ahead of time because we have some highly critical positions in the body, division directors, the Clerk's position, several things. And we're going to have to take that out of the budget. At least I'm willing to take that out of the budget. We had talked about \$100,000 as far as a succession plan. So we did put money in the budget request to allow for the flexibility of certain core positions, with specialized knowledge, turnover. For the past few years, the Executive Board has funded a pay advancement in January for legislative employees in addition to the July cost-of-living increase. As you know, our pay plan is vertical with few opportunities to move up and down the ladder, and the purpose of the January increase is an attempt to improve staff retention by moving our employees across the pay scale. The pay advancement will not be provided this biennium but the COLA will be, like we were talking before. In addition, I will ask the Executive Board to implement a couple of policy changes in order to save some monies in some funds. For example, I would recommend no overlap training for new employees in a division or in senators' offices. In the past we've had a two-week overlap period. Senator Krist implemented a plan last fall and this actually affected me when I had a staff change and would only allow for two days of training overlap. And I'm just going to say we're going to actually ask for no overlap and/or possibly allow it to be vacant for a period of time to allow for a little bit more savings and maybe just ask for these to be open for a few weeks. As you know, not reappropriating all the Legislative Council's unexpended funds is a major shift in how the Legislative Council operated in the past. While I respect the concerns about the transparency of our spending, it is important to note that when unexpended funds have been used in the past it was for approved items that were identified in the Council's budget request. The decision by past Appropriations Committees was to reappropriate unexpended funds for these items instead of

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reappropriating new monies. I'm happy to answer any questions, but I did ask all the division directors to come in. I think that most of them are here this afternoon as well. So if you had specific questions about maybe the capital purchases we could address that and/or specific question as far as how the operating dollars would work. I'd be glad to do that. Let me just give you an overall view of how it kind of worked out as far as the reappropriations. And remember, the Governor took kind of just an eyeball across every agency. He lapsed 76 percent of everybody's reappropriations dollars. That just happened to be pretty lucky in the Legislative Council's budget because had we not had capital improvements built into our budget, we probably could have maintained that. But because we were operating off of our reappropriations, which was somewhat different than most agencies had done, we do need to request back some of those reappropriations dollars to cover these capital improvements. And so what Senator Stinner and I had been talking about over the last two months and actually on the floor with LB22, if you remember, quite a bit of debate with the budget deficit bill at that time, we have a couple of mechanisms that we could address this reappropriation. We could do it today, and I'm discussing the biennium budget. The next bill up is LB149, which Senator Stinner put in place as a shell bill and directly talks about the Legislative Council and it moves \$1 in funds. So it's a shell. It's a mechanism. It's a vehicle for us to make any changes if we need to. If we felt like we needed to do that and actually make it as a deficit bill that would stand alone, we could do that. So I am going to come back up on LB149 and just put it on record asking for this deficit request of \$1.2 million as well. So that may look a little strange to the public, but we're going to leave our options open and I feel important that we get that on the record in that way at that time. So with that, I'll end my testimony. That's hopefully enough. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR STINNER: Are there questions? Senator Bolz. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR BOLZ: Just a quick question. I was taking notes when you were talking about the things that we're not going to be able to do. Can you repeat what you said about the potential (inaudible) for an audit for Retirement Committee? [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: That we're going to cover that. We have to because we would be mandated to do that. [AGENCY 03]

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SENATOR BOLZ: Okay. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Yeah. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR BOLZ: I just wanted to make sure that was (inaudible). [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Right. I think what I said, and it's a good point, there will be no contingency money for contractual services other than current ongoing contracts, and I used the retirement account as one of those. Now what this means in reality is if we have a task force, you know, I don't think the executive branch is going to approve any dollars for that. We could do it through an LB but if we just have a legislative resolution, that's where the...I've forgotten how that works until today I was reminded. If we have a resolution, we're kind of obligated to do that. But I'll fight pretty hard to say we really shouldn't be doing any task force that require \$50,000 or \$10,000 even. So I'd fight pretty hard to say we shouldn't be spending those funds. Good question. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR STINNER: Senator Wishart. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WISHART: I would like to specifically talk about the Ombudsman's Office and how this budget is going to affect their ability to do what they do. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Well, we're covered. If you...yesterday I had handed out this sheet here that shows everybody, the Legislative Council in whole and then each division behind that. It's in there. The Legislative Council has a little bit of flexibility that most agencies don't have. With a letter to the DAS, we can move dollars around inside of our accounts and cover it. If I remember right, the Ombudsman's Office is covered. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WISHART: Okay. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: And I mean I could have Marshall come up or even Martha or somebody else talk about it if you wanted to, but we're covered as far as them doing what they

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have requested, nothing above and beyond that but doing what they have requested in their annual budget. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WISHART: Okay. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR STINNER: You were talking about, just for the record, you were saying that we have step increases built into our pay scale in the legislative staff and you're going to freeze those? Is that...? [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Well, we're going to use the COLA increases, the cost of living that we do, but we're not going to step up. We don't have vertical step-up plans unless we do it ourselves. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR STINNER: Okay. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: So we're not going to do that as proposed. We talked about I think it's a 1 percent in January and a 1.5 (percent)...I should probably have somebody else speak to that directly so I can get that straight on the record if you need it to be. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR STINNER: It's 1 percent and then 1.5? [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: It was going to be but we're not going to be able to do that. We're going to just do straight COLA numbers. You know what, I'm drawing a blank on that. I'm going to defer to maybe Tom might be able to help me out with that. [AGENCY 03]

TOM BERGQUIST: Well, what we have budgeted is the normal... [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR STINNER: You better spell your name. [AGENCY 03]

TOM BERGQUIST: Oh. Tom Bergquist, T-o-m B-e-r-g-q-u-i-s-t. In response, what we have budgeted in the Legislative Council is the same across the board as everyone else: 1 percent on

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July 1 of 2017, 1.5 percent on January 1 of 2019. That's the NAPE master contract. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Uh-huh. [AGENCY 03]

TOM BERGQUIST: In addition, the Council policy is they could give an additional salary increase on January 1 of each year. The last few years we've done about a 1 percent on, so that would be on top of the across-the-board COLA increase. That's not funded and it won't fit in the budget, so there's no money for doing that this biennium. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: That way we would have to add that above and beyond what I'm asking for in reappropriations dollars of the \$1.2 million. If you wanted to do that, I think it's \$400,000 if we wanted to ask for it. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR STINNER: In the preliminary budget, we had specific cuts in specific areas. Is there any variance between what we had in cuts on the preliminary budget? I think we cut some travel, we cut consulting fees, those types of things, kind of went down a list. Is there any inconsistencies with this budget proposal and what we did there? [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: I don't think so. I mean I could go over it again, and I don't believe so. We've gone over it as tightly as we could last couple weeks and kind of pressed the Fiscal Office and the Clerk and Janice and I pulling our hair all out at the same time, trying to figure this out. And I really appreciate the division directors, you know, coming forward and we're talking about it. And it's a hard conversation, there's no doubt about it. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR STINNER: Now one of the things we're trying to eliminate is using reappropriations for operation. We're trying to align that to get our truth in budget. With your proposal, as we move ahead, do we start to true up operating to operating and get away from... [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: No. No, we don't. We need to come back and we'll have to ask for a baseline adjustment in our budget, I believe, in order to manage the normal capital expenditures that we're going to do on an ongoing basis, without any contingencies for HVAC. If I remember

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right, there's always been about a \$1.2 or \$1.4 million request inside of the Legislative Council's budget to do that if they needed to get that back up to speed to know what they actually spent. But as long as they had the reappropriations, they didn't need to worry about that so they didn't ask for a baseline adjustment. In my opinion, if we want to get back to where we should be at and what we're actually spending, we should add about \$1.2 to \$1.4 more million to our baseline budget. I'm not asking for that in the next budget. We could do it that way. But in the future I think we need to get to that point. If we can just reappropriate the dollars that were taken out, we can take care of this issue next year, and the capital expenditures that we do we can carry over to the next biennium. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR STINNER: Did you go back and analyze how we got so much money into the reappropriation? Was it due to vacancies and...? [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: You know, I haven't. I could do a little bit more work on that. We ended up with \$5.8 million of unexpended funds. We lapsed \$3.8 (million). It is a high amount. It's almost 27-28 percent of what we have actually for our budget. Part of that is, you know, we were very frugal. We didn't spend money if we needed to. And Senator Krist even put the brakes on spending any money last summer, which was a good move. I think it was fine and...but now we need to pick up the pieces and spend what we need to spend on a few of these items, I believe. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR STINNER: Just for my sake and maybe for the record, we've asked everybody to move and defer all their needs on maintenance and deferred maintenance and the like of that. I'm looking at your list; \$503,000 would be in your deficit request for telephones and the first part of an installment apparently to improve or to replace our audio/video system. Is that...? [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: The \$503,000, yeah, actually if you look at it, it's \$203,000 for the telephone and the \$300,000 is partially for the Chamber. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR STINNER: That would be in the deficit request for this year? [AGENCY 03]

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SENATOR WATERMEIER: We can do it in the biennium because what we're...actually, the telephone system is going to be ordered in June so it actually wouldn't show up until next year. I mean obviously, if you want to know, we'd like to get that in. If we want to have the only bill out there talking about a deficit as far as General Fund without a cash fund, as the State Treasurer was just talking about, we could put it in LB149. And I'll come back and testify on the record in case that's what we want to do. So this list here that I handed out is what we are going to do for capital improvements and they're right on the line as far as being in this fiscal or next fiscal. Honestly, it should be in this fiscal year but we can drag it over to next year and get it done. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR STINNER: Okay. Any additional questions? Senator Wishart. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WISHART: Was the issue that we had this morning with the display board, is that some of the issues that we perceive are going to be happening, are going to be happening more and more? [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: I went back around the backside and stepped on the cord and made it flicker just so it would look like we had a real serious problem. (Laughter) Yeah. No, if you look at it, the center voting board is different than the two boards on the outside. So the dollars that we have requested, it's my understanding--I would have the Clerk maybe come up and address that if he wanted to--but it's mainly the two boards to the outside. And that involves a computer system and all that workings behinds the scenes. But if you notice, our voting board does flicker quite a few times and it did flicker this morning, which was kind of a good time for that to happen. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR STINNER: I'd like to see us go to a chalkboard, paper ballots and a chalkboard. How's that? [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: (Laugh) Okay. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR STINNER: Any additional questions? Senator Clements. [AGENCY 03]

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SENATOR CLEMENTS: I would be interested in hearing the Clerk give us a little more detail about the audio/video system. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Patrick, (inaudible). [AGENCY 03]

PATRICK O'DONNELL: Yes, sir, be happy to, Senator. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR STINNER: Patrick, would you spell your name, please, for the record. [AGENCY 03]

PATRICK O'DONNELL: Yes, sir. That's Patrick O'Donnell, P-a-t-r-i-c-k O-'-D-o-n-n-e-l-l. Let me respond to Senator Clements first, Senator, and then I'll come back to you. The...we...the audiovisual equipment is the equipment that we have not only in the Chamber but in every one of our public hearing rooms. That equipment is designed to allow for broadcasting on the closed-circuit TV systems that you have in your offices. It allows us to stream all of the public hearings out on the Web so that the public has access to what's going on in the hearing rooms. And it obviously allows us to stream the floor activity in addition to being broadcast by ETV. The request that you have in front of you--if I'm talking too much, you stop me, Senator--but the request that we have in front of you is for a total of \$600,000. We were going to spend \$300,000 this year, but because of the economy and the forecasting activity we deferred. The issue came to our attention last year during session because we started seeing camera failures in some of the rooms, okay? I might also indicate to you, besides all of that public awareness activity, the cameras also provide us with a key component to our transcription and recordkeeping processes. So all of the histories, if you've ever had occasion to look at a legislative history, all that work is being done by our transcription people up in the tower. They work from the video to produce those records that become part of the permanent legislative records, okay? So...and I will tell you also that the \$600,000 bid is one that we work with ETV, NETV closely. They are the ones we've worked with in terms of developing that bid and we spent a good deal of time this summer going through the details and the specifics of that and our goal was to, as I say, spend \$300,000 this fiscal year. And if you look at, at least, my office request, you'll see a \$300,000 item in the biennial request for the second phase of that project, okay? Senator Wishart, your question, the \$200,000 that Senator Watermeier talks about is for, hopefully, replacement of the status boards

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that are on either side of the voting board system, okay? Those were installed in 2002. And as all the technology that you use in the Chamber today, voting systems, the display boards that you see was replaced in 2002. So it's...we're getting to the point where it's close to the end of its useful life. We have noticed, as I think some of you mentioned, that the display boards, certainly we're starting to see some...just some clarity issues and malfunctioning kinds of issues, and we think it's time to replace those. That also was in my request for the next biennium but, because of the carryover balances, we at least had considered that this year again but we deferred, given what was going on with the forecasting activities. This morning, I know part of that was Clerk error this morning in terms of when we were in the middle of a voting deal, so I don't remember exactly what happened but I was...we had things going on up there. So some of that was my fault. But you know, the voting system should last us another few years. We've always tried to anticipate a 20-year turnaround. I think the system that we replaced in 2002 was initially installed in '85 or '86. So we're getting close to the time when we'll have to come back to you and talk to you about replacing the entire voting system. Did that answer your question? [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WISHART: Yes. [AGENCY 03]

PATRICK O'DONNELL: Okay. Yes, sir. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR STINNER: Senator Clements. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR CLEMENTS: Thank you. The age of the video cameras... [AGENCY 03]

PATRICK O'DONNELL: Right. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR CLEMENTS: ...in the different rooms, do you know the age of those? [AGENCY 03]

PATRICK O'DONNELL: We put them in nine years ago. And that's when we started streaming the legislative activity on the Web. So at that time we had a project where we replaced all the cameras that were in the hearing rooms. We had had cameras in there but they worked only in concert with the closed-circuit TV system that you have in your offices, okay? So nine years ago

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we put new cameras in, working again with ETV, that allowed us to go to the transcription activity as well as the streaming activity that you see both in the Chamber and the hearing rooms. So they're nine years old. As I say, we started seeing problems with them. We had two hearing rooms I think last year where we had issues develop during the course of the session. And if they go down, we're at the point now where it's old technology. You can't get replacement parts. So we're in a situation where if we lose a camera, we lose a hearing room, okay? That complicates things both from a streaming standpoint and from our recordkeeping aspect. So is that...

[AGENCY 03]

SENATOR CLEMENTS: Thank you. [AGENCY 03]

PATRICK O'DONNELL: Okay. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR STINNER: Senator Wishart. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WISHART: Are we statutorily required to film these? And what do our statutes require us to do in terms of public (inaudible)? [AGENCY 03]

PATRICK O'DONNELL: As in terms of recordkeeping? [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WISHART: Yes. [AGENCY 03]

PATRICK O'DONNELL: You have one constitutional obligation and that obligation is to create a permanent record of what you do here, okay? That's what we do with the Legislative Journal. That's that document that the young woman sits next to me at my right, she's responsible for creating that document. All the other activities, whether it's verbatim transcripts that we prepare or all of the, you know, all the other things that we keep, voting records and those kinds of things, aren't necessarily mandated as part of our permanent recordkeeping obligation but we've been doing that work since...well, we've got records going back to '37 when we became a Unicameral, okay? I think it was part of the culture. It was part of the vision of the Unicameral going to...and I will tell you we're probably one of the most elaborate in terms of recordkeeping of any state legislature in the country. I don't know other places that do the verbatim work that

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we do here. And you know I'll tell you candidly, pretty proud of that. I mean I like to talk about that when I'm talking to my colleagues around the country, so. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR STINNER: We can't charge NET for our broadcasts, huh, to pay us to be on?  
[AGENCY 03]

PATRICK O'DONNELL: You know, they do a lot of good things for us on the gratis, Senator, so.  
[AGENCY 03]

SENATOR STINNER: Naming rights or something like that. Senator Bolz. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR BOLZ: Thank you for your service, Patrick. And since we're on the subject, I'll say thank you to the transcribers that end up transcribing this hearing. [AGENCY 03]

PATRICK O'DONNELL: That's kind, Senator. Thank you for that. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR BOLZ: I just...you're such a diplomat, I wanted to give you an opportunity to address any issues that you want to bring to our attention here that we should discuss as a committee even if we haven't directly asked the question. If there's anything else that should be (inaudible), please do that. [AGENCY 03]

PATRICK O'DONNELL: No. I mean I think Senator Watermeier has laid out to you that we can, I believe, live with the recommendations of the committee, if we can make that \$1.2 million adjustment. I think he's also laid out to you issues that we will have to deal with down the road. I mean the switch thing, I don't understand why things cost \$25,000. I can just tell you they do, okay? And when they happen, we're going to have to figure out how we're going to deal with that. I mean that's what the unexpended balances allowed us to do in the past. But I'm sure I speak for the other division directors in saying to you that we're going to watch the money and try and build some balances up again so we've got a little bit of an insurance cushion to cover those kinds of things. I mean my request was for \$5.1 million, all right? You currently have authorized \$4. million, \$4. plus million to the Clerk's Office. If we do this \$1.2 million fix that Senator Watermeier has talked about, about approximately \$800,000 of that would come to the

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Clerk, so it will get me closer to being whole. But I don't want you to misunderstand, that we're not back to where we were before the enactment of LB22, but no one expects that, so.  
[AGENCY 03]

SENATOR BOLZ: Thank you. [AGENCY 03]

PATRICK O'DONNELL: Uh-huh. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR STINNER: Any additional questions? Senator Clements. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR CLEMENTS: Patrick, regarding the streaming of hearings to the public, are those also available later on for the public to recall recorded video? [AGENCY 03]

PATRICK O'DONNELL: We do not make video available to the public, Senator, okay? A couple of reasons: One, video, first of all, is not a good medium for long-term storage, all right? And before we had video we just had good people upstairs pounding away at typewriters and since computers, creating those records. We now use video to help them with those records and it's, frankly, made us more efficient in terms of that recordkeeping transcription process. So we...but we choose not to make video available to the public. We use it for our transcription purposes and once it's...I mean when the session is over and we've completed our records, we'll get rid of that stuff, okay? Now I say that to you, there will be occasions, I need to look around and look at Dick because he'll tell me if I'm blowing smoke at you. That's not my intention. We do keep...I mean I use some video, for example, in orientation activities from previous sessions occasionally, that kind of thing. But if somebody walked in off the street and asked to see a copy of the video from the debate this morning on LB46, that would not be made available. We would get them a hard copy of the transcript and the floor activity, but we wouldn't give them a copy of the video. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR CLEMENTS: Okay. Thank you. [AGENCY 03]

PATRICK O'DONNELL: Okay. [AGENCY 03]

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SENATOR STINNER: Any additional questions? Seeing none, thank you. [AGENCY 03]

PATRICK O'DONNELL: Thank you. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR STINNER: Any additional proponents? Any opponents? Seeing none, anybody in the neutral capacity? Seeing none, would you like to make some comments, Senator? [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Yeah, I would. I think I was going to bring out the offer right now to ask any of the division directors if there's something behind the scenes that they'd like to say if I wasn't in the room or do something like that. It would be fine. But what Senator Bolz brought up was a good question of the Clerk there: Are there things behind the scenes? I've done the very best I can to dig into this budget but there's no way I know it like I know my own farm. You know, I've got a small budget, \$5 million budget, at home but I don't know...I know it intimately but I can never know this budget like I do. And I'll never know it no matter how many questions I ask. So I think we're in a realm to ask for this \$1.2 million. I think it's completely okay. And I'll say this on the floor when it comes up and we have to debate this or defend it, but you know we're a full standing third of the governing body of Nebraska, right? The Governor is a part, the Supreme Court is a part, and we're a part but we serve in a part-time capacity. But we manage an \$8 billion budget. We appropriate an \$8 billion budget in this room right here and it's kind of amazing. So someone would say, well, you do it on a part-time basis, you don't need all that help, you don't need all that support behind the scenes. But I would say it's more important that we have all the support we need because we're the public's eye. I mean we...the public expects to come in and talk to us or our staff and we have to answer these questions. So I'm fully okay asking for the request that I am. And I'll come back two years from now and I'll ask for another \$1.2 (million) to get our base up to snuff and then have those capital expenditures built into that. So we don't have to worry about, you know, carrying things forward and do that. But I mean that's been...they've done a great job behind the scenes and I really want to commend all the division directors because they came forth; had good, honest conversations; but I know there's things behind the scenes that they'd probably like to ask for and I'm not smart enough to ask for every single thing that I know they need. But I hope they'll tell me if we really have a real serious need. So I think they have. [AGENCY 03]

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SENATOR STINNER: Thank you. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: All right. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR STINNER: Any questions? Seeing none, thank you. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Okay. [AGENCY 03]

SENATOR STINNER: That concludes our hearing on Agency 03, Legislative Council. We will now move to LB149. Good afternoon, Senator Bolz and fellow members of Appropriations Committee. For the record, my name is John, J-o-h-n, Stinner, S-t-i-n-n-e-r, and I represent District 48, which is comprised of Scotts Bluff County. LB149 is a shell bill which was introduced this year as part of the committee's contingency plan for ongoing budget situations in Nebraska. As we develop the committee's budget recommendation which we will...be presented to the legislative body, there may be additional deficits or changes to existing deficits as enacted early this session under LB22. As you all are aware, these potential changes will become part of the committee's budget recommendations and is due to be submitted to the floor no later than the seventieth day of the session, which falls on April 24. Since the Governor did not submit any additional deficit bills this year, LB149 will likely be needed as part of the committee's final budget recommendations as we continue to make adjustments. The bill, in its current form, reduces the current fiscal year budget for the Fiscal Office by \$1. As we move forward with our recommendation, the contents of this bill will change. Thank you for your hard work. And I will take any questions. [AGENCY 03 LB149]