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(Start Belt #12)

Legislature really has and it's main obligation to the people is to see that the tax funds of the people are appropriated in the first place to meet the needs that are required to serve the people adequately. And, in the second place to see that those funds that we appropriate are appropriately spent by the various agencies. There's no way that we can fulfill the second responsibility unless we have control and responsibility for the auditing procedures and how those funds are spent. I think Senator Mahoney referred to the fact that 37 other state legislatures maintain this responsibility. And, I think the greatest example of the necessity for this kind of agency and powers under the legislative branch is in the Federal government which is the general accounting office. I think we have witnessed quite powerfully over the last several years the growth of the executive power in Federal government. The soup restraint upon that unlimited power has been the general accounting office and that office has exposed numerous cost overruns in the area of defense and welfare and the whole spectrum of the Federal government. Without that authority in the legislative branch, our Federal executives would have been even more dictatorial than it has become today, and more run away with power. I think we're in the same situation and we have the same obligations and responsibilities.

PRESIDENT: The chair recognizes Senator Stahmer and then Stull, Anderson, Marvel.

SENATOR STAHMER: Mr. Chairman, I would like to have Senator Mahoney respond to a question if he would. I want to apologize to him, I didn't catch a few of his opening remarks. Senator Mahoney, if the bill were to be brought back, where in your estimation should this function be placed? Should it be placed, in other words, with our fiscal staff or do you foresee a new group of people with some other different title that we would set up and...under some committee. Personally, I would suggest that I would not favor having this auditing function becoming a part of our fiscal operation. And, I would be happy to tell you why. But, I didn't catch where you thought, if we brought it back, it would go, so to speak.

SENATOR MAHONEY: All right, Senator Stahmer. In the other 37 states, if you'll read in the Council of State Government, and the research....and you're a great researcher....and you're a great worker....and I know you....you probably have missed this particular paper. But where it happens is it goes back to our legislative fiscal staff in which our particular executive board and the executive board of this Legislature changing every two years in which it will change January 1st of next year and there'll be new members on this Board, we'll have the opportunity to have that fiscal staff which has been beefed up as Senator Marvel has said. This is the staff, this is the group that will be handling this particular part of audit. So, you see, Senator Stahmer, this is something....and I know that you are probably the first in....and I agree with you, that we give so many of our responsibilities away in this Legislature. This is probably something we should keep for ourselves. This keeps it so that the Legislature also has that opportunity to do the very things that it is trying to check into in the first place.

SENATOR STAHMER: Well, Senator Mahoney, if I understand you correctly, are you suggesting that our fiscal staff do this?

SENATOR MAHONEY: Well, you see, Senator, we have the Executive Board which has the powers to do so. We could set this up. We have just increased our fiscal staff by almost another times this amount.

SENATOR STAHMER: All right. I didn't know this letter was coming over today, number one. When I did talk to another senator

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