

you are about three things. Number one, if you do not want, for political reasons or otherwise, a tax increase then this is the only feasible way to get it done. It truly is. Because if you think you're going to turn around and do individual cuts, whether they be the Beutler package amendments or whatever, it is not realistic to believe that. Those cuts that the Appropriations Committee made, the \$10 million, took about three days of debate here on the floor and, remember, on those you had the entire Appropriations Committee, you had the Legislature, you didn't even have the University fighting them. You had everybody basically accepting them. From this point on individual cuts are not realistic. I've been here before as a number of the others of you have. It is not realistic. So then you have your choice. If you don't want a tax increase, this is a method to accomplish it, across the board cuts. Because of the cuts that have been made and some juggling that can be done, 2 percent can probably accomplish that goal precisely as Senator Beutler argues. Three percent would be a guarantee and it would maybe even leave a little money to spend if we wanted, but 2 percent could probably prevent any tax increase. Is that wise or unwise? Each of you individually make your choice, but I suggest we do quickly get the figure to 2 percent and then vote on that basis as to whether you want to do across the board and make that, just like Senator Warner said, this is the moment of truth. Either you're going to do it this way or you're going to have a tax increase and I think that's a fair and fairly accurate statement of where you are right now. Because after this, yes, you can spend two or three days targeting this and targeting that and trying this cut and that. I'm not sure it's realistic and I don't claim it's wise to do this. I claim it is a way to avoid a tax increase if for political or other reasons you believe that's the way to go, if that's what you want, this is the way to do it. I might add it would be the single largest budget cut or spending cut in the history of the State of Nebraska which may be good or bad. I happen to agree with everything Senator Marsh and the others say. Yes, it will impact agencies. it will hurt. It will make some people tighten their belts and figure out other solutions. I do suggest this. If we do go ahead and do this, a 2 percent cut because I think that's what we're talking about now, if we do do a 2 percent cut, we then consider the possibility of making some other adjustments such as maybe a salary increase in January that is significantly or slightly