

their last year's budget, and from that 95 percent to mark up their priorities, numbered one, two, three and so on when they came before the committee with their hearing. The committee has been through that process. The remark has been made if those add backs are substantial and have enough credibility, they will be done here on the floor. Well, let me tell you, let me tell you that that same credibility, those same presentations were made before our committee when those agencies and departments appeared before us, and that through our committee decision and analysis we made that decision on what we believed was right and justifiable. I want to say that, in my opinion, after 15 years being in this body, this Legislature has come as close to completely abolishing the committee structure as any session of the Legislature that I have ever attended. It is my opinion and I suggest to you today and I say this with seriousness, if the way you are operating on this budget this year is the way you want it and like it, that we no longer have the Appropriations Committee go through the hours and hours before session, before we ever meet in January, and then hours and hours after we meet to bring a recommendation to this body, but have those recommendations or requests sent directly to the floor, and this body make that decision on whether they are going to grant them or not grant them. I think that that would give the Appropriations Committee a good R & R. I'll tell you this much, that Appropriations Committee can use it to a full advantage. Senator DeCamp has mentioned some of the things that were exempted out of his amendment that are provided by the Constitution. I suggest to you that if they are taken out and are cut back that they certainly are challengeable and probably will be. I grant you this year is a different year than we have experienced for a good many. But in the eyes of the Appropriations Committee and through their deliberations and analysis they have arrived at a decision and at a level that they believe is a very bare level of operations for state government, knowing full well that state government takes the minimum amount of our state monies, and that the most of it, or a big share of it goes back to the local level. For every dollar that you take away from those aid programs you are just adding some more to what we hoped to reduce, the property tax. I suggest to you that you'd better think again of what you are doing to this year's budget and to this year's procedure, or else radically change it. Thank you, Mr. President.