

body do likewise and I would urge the body to support the two percent across the board cut.

PRESIDENT: The Chair would like to announce that Senators Lynch and Pirsch have guests in the north balcony. They are 47 fourth graders from Hartman Elementary School in Omaha and they are accompanied by their teachers and their principal. Thank you for coming down and visiting the Legislature today. If you would stand we'd like to recognize you. There is a motion on the desk.

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Withem would move to suspend the rules and vote immediately without further debate or amendment on the Beutler amendment to LB 722.

PRESIDENT: Senator Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM: Mr. President and members of the body, my amendment is similar to the amendment Senator Hannibal attempted to file yesterday to all amendments. It is, quite frankly, an attempt to get at this main motion before lunch, to get an up or down vote on whether or not we want to cut two percent out of the budget. It is not an attempt to thwart future debate because after this amendment, the Beutler amendment is voted on and adopted or not adopted, there will be numerous opportunities to continue to amend the bill itself. I am not seeking to shut out input by this. What I am seeking to do is get to an up or a down vote before lunch and I think all of you know why. We are really at this moment at an historic moment in this body. I can recall when I first came down here to the body, I sound like an old timer, I realize it wasn't all that long ago, when I first came down to the body I was sitting up in Senator Lynch's seat. One of the first bills we debated was whether or not the Legislature should set tax rates. Those of you who came after me may not remember, there was a day when the Legislature would simply pass on a budget, pass it on over to the Governor. The Governor would veto some things. He'd bring it back and we'd override a bunch of the vetoes. Then it would be up to the Board of Equalization to set the tax rates. A very important bill when I first came down here was to put this burden back in the Legislature. I sat next to Senator Howard Lamb at that time and Howard Lamb said a number of passionate speeches, that if this bill passes the Legislature will never again lower taxes, that it will take every opportunity to raise taxes. Last year we