

Crippled Children's Program and Transfer of Education Aid for Wards of the State from the Department of Education to the Department of Social Services. The problem with the 2 percent across the board cut I think is emerging and we all have those items that we think are significant, those items that we feel even under current budgeting are not receiving an adequate amount to do what we, in creating those programs, intended to have done. I'm hoping that as we go along some of the programs that merit consideration will be given that consideration. This Program 347 is the one that I'm asking to be exempted at this point. If the Legislature goes through with its intent to cut the aid to the unborn children by 50 percent, that is unconscionable. To take an additional 2 percent is like pouring water on a drowning baby so to speak. A lot of people have come before the Judiciary Committee talking about various aspects of domestic violence. They talk about spouse abuse, child abuse. I guess anything that happens within the context of the family is considered domestic violence. We have always been told and most of us agree that these programs designed to aim at these problems are not adequately funded. So if we feel that domestic violence is a serious problem and there ought to be some state resources expended in trying to solve or cope with this problem, we should not cut 2 percent. If you look at the amounts that would be affected, the argument might be made that the amount is not that great when you consider the total amount of the budget and the total \$15 million. But if the amount is not that great in terms of actual dollars, why go to these programs that are hurting already, that are aimed at helping those who are hurting and say we're going to squeeze this additional measure out of them? We're going to turn the screw a bit tighter and add a bit more agony and difficulty. The amount of good that will be accomplished in the budget cutting process by eliminating 2 percent from these programs does not justify the amount of harm that will be placed upon those who are designed to benefit from these programs. So I hope what you will do is consider that the crippled children ought to be given consideration, the dependent children, those who may be victims or even participants in domestic violence, the mental retardation regional offices, all of these things which on other occasions we have stood on the floor and spoken very strenuously in behalf of. So I hope that you will adopt this amendment and remove this program from those that will receive the 2 percent across the board cut.