

priority or it was a high priority, I should say, for us to not take any funds from the Department of Roads, that roads were so important to us that we couldn't cut it. Well, I totally disagree with that. I happen to think that we should look at that particular side before we start looking at cutting higher education, recognizing that higher education and economic development go hand in hand. I also think that we're in a situation as far as the taxes are concerned, raising the revenue, that probably this body in the end is going to have to be the one that shows the political courage to raise the revenues necessary to keep us moving forward as a state. I don't know where that line is that we can cut in higher education without damaging the future, but it is a natural resource that we've got to protect, much as Senator Schmit pointed out about some of the natural resources we have in soil and water in this state we'd ought to protect. There comes a point, and, ladies and gentlemen, I think we're at that point where there are certain things you simply can't eliminate. There are certain places you've got to start putting some priorities together if we intend to pull ourselves out of these doldrums that we're in. There are some certain things we're going to have to do if we're going to inject any optimism at all. Now I know there is a lot of my constituents that are telling me to cut, cut, cut and not raise taxes, but at the same time their children and their grandchildren are going to be needing an education and maybe they don't recognize it yet, but that's the whole essence of politics and that is to be leaders. We're supposed to recognize it and I suggest that we all do. I would further say that what...regardless of what happens, if we decide we're not going to cut as deep at the state colleges or we're not going to cut as deep at the University level, then I'm going to offer an amendment that we don't cut as deep at the tech colleges as well. We didn't see a lot of tech college students up in the balconies, but there are a lot of folks out there that depend on those community college systems. I don't know how we can pick on just two particular sides of our higher education system without looking at the other side as well. So I would suggest to you that you keep that in mind as we start setting these priorities and I, looking in front of me, I'm not sure there is a lot of interest in this. There is not a lot of our colleagues in here.

SPEAKER NICHOL: One minute.