

went through a primary and general election and faced that when we made that decision last spring, but went ahead and did what we thought was right and overrode those vetoes and raised the taxes and that was not a popular thing to do. We all know that. At the same time, now we come back into special session and essentially that same package of cuts was cut in half, presented to us midway through the budget year and the committee has looked at those and essentially left them with only a few alterations. And I guess I ask you, where are we today? What has happened? If we, of course, had the crystal ball back in April and had seen what was happening, it would have spared a lot of us a great deal of agony in the last few months to have just gone along with those cuts that we are now considering today, months ago before the elections, before the different hoops we had to jump through in the primary and general elections and go before the public and find a very strong reaction in some cases against that. It just makes me wonder about the situation. I think, personally, I'm not going to get into a lot of it, I think we are going to talk about this later, but I think it just seems like we haven't made any progress. We are spinning our wheels. We are doing full circles. We are coming around and around and around; four out of the last six years special sessions. We have had many cutting of budgets at the end of regular sessions and now the very same proposals that we thought on a three to one basis weren't good policy for the state last spring are now being considered once again midyear. If we were going to cut, the cuts should have been last spring when you can plan a little better. Now it's midyear, commitments have been made, and of all the things we are doing, it just seems like this is about the worst option we could have. And I know Senator Warner is trying to plan ahead. I know his intentions are good, the Governor's intentions are good. I'm not dismissing that. The committee is doing the best they can. But I'm just raising the question that the appearances aren't good and the tailspin we're in and the flight downward that we are going in doesn't seem to be changing. I think we have got to ask some pretty hard questions about where this state is going and what the situation is because I think it's pretty darn serious. I think it's time we tried to break out of this cycle and move in a little more positive thrust.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Mr. Clerk, I understand you have a motion.

CLERK: Mr. President, not a motion, but I have requests just to alert the membership to separate out the issues of state aid to both the schools and counties, to vote on that separately. I