

that is there for the public's consumption about, I'm not going to be involved until I take office, and things like that, would seem to not be accurate. So, what I intend to do... Senator Nelson, what I am going to do is go out there and see if there are people from the other administration lobbying against this amendment. That is what I'm talking about. That is what I was told. I was told by some people that they had been lobbied in that fashion. So, I'm putting it on the record. If they did not tell me the truth, they know who they are. So, what I indicated, Senator Nelson and Senator Labeledz, is that I'm going to sit back and watch this Titanic struggle play itself out. I wish that the vote could be taken on the merits of the issue. The merits would dictate that this cut not occur. If you all are going to talk, you shouldn't talk where I can see you and read your lips and so forth. I'm talking to Senator Labeledz and Senator Nelson. I said the Orr administration. Now... oh, she said, oh. I tried to be delicate by saying they are not yet in office, officially, but they had said in the paper they are not going to get involved. I was kind of being delicate. But I hope that you will, those who voted for this amendment this morning, will vote for it this afternoon and let us get to the nub of the matter, at least on this amendment if none of the others. The schools have been political footballs in the past, there is no denying that, and they will be so in the future. But at this particular time we are in midstream, so to speak. Commitments have been made by the state, and I think it should be kept. This cut should not occur.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Warner, please. Then Senator Withem.

SENATOR WARNER: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I rise to oppose the reduction. I think it needs to be put in the perspective of what the total issue is. The reduction you are talking about, at least on a statewide basis, for elementary and secondary education is somewhere in the vicinity of two-tenths of 1 percent, to .25 of 1 percent which is pretty insignificant when you look at the kind of percentage reductions that are being looked at in other areas, or, for that matter, as what was done in other state agencies last spring during the regular session. One of the problems we have that makes this kind of reduction so difficult is almost 75 percent of our total budget goes in three areas, human resources, higher education, elementary and secondary education. Almost 50 percent of our General Fund budget is just education, elementary, secondary and higher education. When you are looking for places to cut and reduce it is almost... it is impossible to ignore such a large