

SENATOR GOODRICH: John, I notice in your amendment here that you are asking us to adopt, it says, the school districts shall adjust their budgets to reflect a decrease in state aid to education and shall treat such reductions as a permanent reduction. What you are saying, in essence, is that if they find that they can get by with something out of their budget and take it out and list that for us and all that sort of stuff that you call for, that that would be treated as a permanent reduction that even regardless of the circumstances they could never put it back in, and that seems a little harsh to me. What's your response?

SENATOR DECAMP: My response is, that's true. I suspect during the next two or three years you are going to have to be cutting some things. And, obviously, in the next two or three or five or ten years there is going to be a lot of changes down here, a lot of changes in budgets and a lot of changes in programs. Never is a long, long time. Never means forever and I undoubtedly assume that in the next several years there will be some changes and maybe a change in this law, if you were to adopt it, that would say, okay, this no longer applies. But at this point in time you have got to worry about the fact that you are cutting, you are cutting money from them and you are not addressing the spending of the money. Until you face the fact that you can't just cut one-half without dealing with the other side, the actual spending, you are not accomplishing anything, you are only compounding local property tax problems. So my goal here would be to say, as I say, this goes on down the line, identify where you have cut it and it is out until such time as the Legislature or the law changes to find more money, or substitute programs. It's that simple.

SENATOR GOODRICH: Okay, now you have given us your objective. Since this is going into a budget bill, this budget bill will end June 30th. That isn't too permanent, is it?

SENATOR DECAMP: Nothing the Budget Committee does is that permanent, Senator Goodrich, as you even can figure out. For example, you may start a building now and know that it is going to require future appropriations. Or you may start a project, and, yes, that can be terminated at any time, such as getting a little part done on the Atkinson Dam and then not finishing it, which is fine. My point is this does it for now. They would have to get the program cleaned up now. And just like the building that gets one-fourth of the way built, we presume